THE VEILED EMPRESS

BENJAMIN A. MORTON

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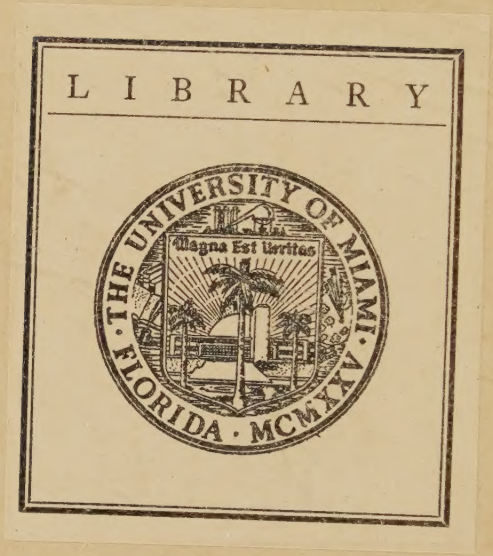

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AIMÉE DUBUC DE RIVERY

devenue Sultane Validé, mère de Mahmoud II.

The Veiled Empress

An Unacademic Biography

By

Benjamin A. Morton

With Eight Illustrations from
Paintings by
Christina Morton

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Made in the United States of America

TO

MY MOTHER

AND

MY MOTHER-IN-LAW

C. M. B. A. M.

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THE VEILED EMPRESS

THE VEILED EMPRESS

I

PROLOGUE

Aimée Dubuc de Rivery, the Veiled Empress, Sultana Mother of Mahmoud the Great, to him "Empress the Best Beloved," born and brought up in Martinique's remotest corner, in all the long history of the Ottoman Dynasty she was the first person to wield imperial power who had any knowledge of the modern civilization of Western Europe.

Though heretofore unknown to history, Aimée Dubuc de Rivery was a person of the first magnitude in historical significance. To the failure of the English to obtain the mastery of Constantinople in 1807; to the revolution of 1808, that made possible the survival of the Ottoman Empire; and to the downfall of Napoleon, her romantic story is a vital clue.

Twenty-two years ago, Edouard Driault, a great authority upon the history of the Napoleonic period, said that nothing of interest remained to be discovered concerning any person of importance

during that period. Considering the mountains of books written about that period, the amazing industry of research spent upon every part of it, his statement seems as certain a prediction as one could make, yet here is a volume that claims to reveal something of interest concerning two persons of importance during that epoch.

No historian has pointed out the part played by Mahmoud in the destruction of the power of Napoleon, and none has presented the sequence of events leading to Mahmoud's decision.

From scattered fragments, gathered with great difficulty in widely separated places, this dramatic chapter of history has been pieced together. No one of these fragments was of importance in itself. All were more or less misleading. None approached completeness. Many have never been published in any printed account and none in any generally accessible publication. The strangest fact of all is the way the thread is lost in obscure places and concealed by false clues. The vagueness of echoes heard here and there served to arouse scepticism as well as interest. The story of the Veiled Empress has been so long forgotten that she seems a pathetic wraith of Martinique seeking, so far in vain, to make known her tragedy, too strangely significant not to be forever remembered. *Qui vivra verra.*

To-day, one of her great-grandsons is the exiled Padishah of the Ottoman Empire, and another of her great-grandsons is Caliph of the Faithful. And before them, two of her grandsons and three of her great-grandsons had been girded by the Grand Master of the Mevlevi Dervishes with the Sword of Osman, the sacred emblem of the Majesty of the Ottomans. In imperial state her body lies in Stamboul. Her story belongs to Martinique.

She was one of the four lovely daughters of Martinique who by marvelous strokes of fortune were raised to royal thrones.

Françoise d'Aubigné, Madame de Maintenon, widow of Scarron, the witty poet and novelist, wife of Louis Quatorze, not quite a queen, yet with greater state and power than any queen of her day, though not born in Martinique, spent several years of her childhood there. In all the centuries, what child more wretched, what lady grander than the consort of the Grande Monarque, sharing with the Sun King the zenith of human splendor.

Marie Joseph Rose Tascher de la Pagerie, Josephine, Empress of the French,—what woman in all time shared such a throne of Empire—was born in Martinique, and lived there the first sixteen years of her life.

Hortense de Beauharnais, Queen of Holland, daughter of the Empress and mother of an Emperor,

lived in Martinique for two years, and both her father and mother were born there.

In Martinique, the velvet caress of the trade-wind whispers that these four daughters of the tropics may have owed to its sweet gentleness something of their graciousness and loveliness.

So little is Martinique known, I venture to set forth first a pageant of its every-day life, intended to serve in some degree the main function of history; that of giving a sense of the reality of the past. Françoise, Josephine, Hortense, Aimée must have known just such people, heard just such stories, seen these very mountains and valleys. These things were all just as real in the past. This island of silent volcanoes where the trade-wind plays with tropical clouds is still the same haunted land of poignant charm.

According to the formula of Dryasdust, the life of the place to-day has little to do with history. Without intending to look for it, I found in Fort-de-France another unknown chapter of history running back at least to the eighteenth century in France. To me even stranger than the forgetting of the story of the French Sultana is the fact that no one of the many who have written about Martinique has noticed the historical significance obvious in the costumes of the women of that island. I have, therefore, written of this link with

the past in detail out of proportion to the point of view of those who do not see the importance of the history of customs and clothes, who do not recognize that human taste is more fundamental than political boundaries. The costumes of Martinique and the courage of Mahmoud are both witness to the *esprit* of the young Frenchmen who went pioneering in the seventeenth century.

According to the conventions of historical narrative the two pageant chapters are no part of the biography of the Veiled Empress. They give merely the picture I see as I write the words *Aimée Dubuc de Rivery was born in Martinique.* To my mind the pageant conjured up by the word *Martinique* pervades the whole story. Those interested only in the historical narrative and not in the implications of observation should begin with the part entitled "The Veiled Empress."

THE PAGEANT OF THE STREET

A CROSS STREET

II

THE PAGEANT OF THE STREET

Foc ou domi bò la rivìè pou ou connaitt parole pouésson.
(You must sleep on the river-bank to understand the language of the fish.) *Martinique Proverb.*

In Martinique of to-day you see only a reflection of the brave show of eighteenth century Martinique, yet in blazing sun and golden shadow, the street and throng are more colorful than Morocco or Algiers of to-day. Shop façades, with patterns in color, striped and chequered, painted across walls and doors and shutters; gay band-boxes when closed; when open, oriental bazaars giving windowless upon the street.

A pageant of costumes, ranging in vibrant electrical radiance from red of the flamboyant to purple of the bougainvillea; torches of color, in endless procession aflare in the sun.

In so far as the eighteenth century survives, it is primarily due to the fact that the population of Martinique is largely of negro blood. The negro, thriving in excellent adaptibility to this environment, with great capacity for imitation but with less for progress, continues to reflect in certain

EDITH

imitations the last vigorous impulse of French life in the island, that of the aristocratic ascendancy of the eighteenth century. The French people of the island, of course, have felt to some extent the modern currents of life in France. They have, however, always been few in number, and with their less dominant position, the main current of the life of the island seems to flow slowly.

The surviving vestiges of the past are most apparent in the costumes of the negro women. The costume of Martinique, which they wear, is a flower of eighteenth century France run riot on tropical soil. The gamut of color and design is in keeping with complexions ranging from banana to ebony, and features, from French to African, varied now and then with Hindu or Chinese.

The vocabulary of color is so vague that a description sounds like the inventory of a calico-shop. In paint alone is it possible to suggest this passing harlequinade.

In the street just below our balcony, three young women greet each other with good-natured familiarity and stop long enough for us to see that they are representatively vivid. After a little parley, Fifine, our resourceful maid, induces them to come up to the balcony and pose for the painter.

The one in red says (in French), "I have an English name, *Eh-deet.*"

LOUISE

Edith carries herself with the smart swagger of a well-set-up, red-coated officer in his dress uniform. But for the grace with which she hits it off there would be a suggestion of insolence in her akimbo posture.

She is a *capresse*, with the reddish brown skin characteristic of that type. Her brilliant red dress with the green kerchief, though typical is unlike any other in the street. She wears her kerchief loose at the ends in the chic fashion of the younger women. Her turban is exactly folded and tied, with two of the madras ends pulled across to give the effect of a feather stuck through. The third end forms a carefully placed subsidiary accent. Life is a brave show with her, bravely played.

Louise, the second one of the group, can hardly keep her eyes away from Edith's portrait. She really loves the patterns, the colors, the beauty of the costumes. She talks of clothes with an almost ecstatic emotion. Her own flowered dress, she tells us, is a "*robe à bouquets à la Pompadour*" and is indeed of a design and mode such as *la Pompadour* might have worn. Her turban is particularly smart with an upright end like a tongue of flame.

As her own portrait progresses, Louise gives it extremely critical attention. Though painting

is all new to her, she has from her study of color in dress an intelligent idea of color in painting. Her eyes are accurate.

"It is all right," she says, "for me to hold my *foulard* that way for a moment, but when you paint it in a portrait it has to stay there forever and it grows tiresome."

Siltiese, the third of the group, suggests in her taciturnity and in a certain cast of her countenance a strain of Chinese blood. Though she herself recognizes this suggestion in her portrait, we are not certain that it is real. She does not tell us anything about herself except that her family was practically wiped out in the catastrophe at St. Pierre. At least her name holds out indefinable connotation of strange ancestry.

Louise is much more interested in watching the passing show of the street than she is in returning to her work as laundress, pounding clothes all day long on hot stones far up the bed of Rivière Madame in the blazing sun. It is hard all-day work, and she frankly doesn't like it.

Louise waves a friendly greeting to an old woman in the street who is calling out "*Machann titiri!*" *Titiri* are the tiniest of little fishes, so small that a white bait looks like a big fish beside them. The little old vendor in dress of broad pink and gray and blue stripes, a kerchief of as rich a chocolate

as her skin, swings along cheerfully with the heavy tub on her head.

The name of these little fishes comes from *tirer éclair* (to draw lightning). They are supposed to bring a storm, a curious tradition for these most minute fishes. Just now they are catching them by the million, using sheets instead of nets. They are good to eat, the old woman soon sells out her tub, and the amount of lightning they bring doesn't hurt anyone.

Down the street comes an old woman who sells cakes, her wooden tray on her head and her folding stand under her arm, calling out "*Pain au beurre! Bien cuitt!*" They do look well cooked. She stops beside the little stand of the old woman who sells candy.

The newcomer sets up her stand also in her accustomed place near the gnarled gray trunk of the sand-box tree. In her dark purplish crimson dress, her kerchief, gold and yellow damask, her vermilion and dark green turban, she becomes a dignified spectator of the pageant.

Smiling at all the world as if she enjoys the joke, a young girl goes by with a fish two feet long across a small dish on her head. She hums a bit of a tune and seems on the point of dancing. She wears a green dress with great white polka dots and an orange kerchief.

Vendors with all sorts of things pass in and out of the pageant. A milk-woman comes with a can of milk on her head, a heavy five-gallon oil *bidon.* A handful of grass strewn on top of the milk helps to keep it from splashing out. She seems a figure for a carnival, in flaming turkey-red dress with big white flowers, kerchief of yellow brocade, turban of red and yellow stripes.

From around the corner with a terrifying roar, an automobile swiftly lunges at her. A powerful swerve of her body and she swings away from the wheels, not spilling a drop of milk, or even bothering to look at the car as she goes on about her business.

A vendor of alligator pears and mangoes passes, her tray heaped with polished green and purple *avocats* and luscious yellow grafted "*mangues Julie.*" A tall copper-colored woman, in a pale red dress with strong red roses and yellow kerchief, she strides along calling out "*les avocats pour déjeuner, mangue pour dessè* (dessert)" and "*Avocats, bons avocats*" in a staccato melody. She glances quickly from side to side and up at the windows looking for customers, hardly moving the tray on her head.

With a swift rush of rain-drops, a sudden tropical shower dashes up the street. The old woman takes shelter for a moment in a doorway. She is

quickly joined by one or two passers-by, among them an old vendor of chestnuts, in mauve, with a brownish red kerchief and a bright red and white turban, whose cry of "*Châtains! tout chauds!*" we had heard far down the street.

The shower is gone with as swift a rush as it came, and with the sudden glare of the sun the hot street dries almost instantly.

A young woman stops to speak to a man eating his *pain au beurre.* On top of her turban surveying the street with lazy slits of eyes, a little gray striped kitten purrs contentedly.

Louise watches rather enviously a self-satisfied matron getting out of a motor car which her husband has just driven up to the hotel door. Louise says they are from Marin. It is easy to see from a certain smugness, a certain lack of smartness that the placid young matron from Marin, a distant little village by the sea, is not a dweller in the metropolis of Fort-de-France.

"Ah, Madame," Louise says, "think of coming to town in your automobile and buying everything you want at the shops and having a luncheon party at the hotel."

As if she had been reflecting that the fortunate lady from Marin may have no more white blood than she herself has, she says, "I have a sister who is as fair as you are, and whose hair is as flat, and

curiously, Madame, we have the same father and the same mother."

Siltiese asks Louise in the patois, why she doesn't get her lover to buy her an automobile if she wants one so badly. Loulouse (so she is called in the patois) snaps back that "Madame does not speak Creole, but she understands more than you think."

"*Eh, bien!*" Louise adds, "for all that people think that having the same initials for the words of your name brings you luck, this name of mine, Louise Labrador—Labrador was my mother's name, you see,—has not brought me good luck."

"Yes," she repeats with a sigh, "as the saying goes, when you have bad luck, a single grain of rice will break your head, a butter-leaf will cut your foot, a serpent will bite you with the tip of his tail."

Much she seems to care though, there is fun enough in her biting wit and trenchant phrase.

In the meantime, the little matron from Marin is drinking rum punches with her husband and friends before *déjeuner* and is watching the painting with increasing curiosity. She knows that she is better worth painting than Louise. She is smilingly willing to keep her husband and friends waiting a few minutes for their *bouillabaisse* while she poses for a sketch. When her husband sends for her to come down she says "Tell him I will

be down as soon as Madame is through painting me."

"These men think of nothing but food," she adds to Madame. Husbands seem much alike the world over. As for her she would rather pose than eat, she knows her dress is lovely, she likes the set of her *tête calendée*, the calendered yellow turban with the little stick-up in front, which they call *provocation*.

As she goes down the stairs, an old negro woman, with an arrogant red turban, enters the patio from the street and comes up on the balcony. She struts along with a great bouquet of real flowers and another of artificial flowers in a formal conical bull's-eye arrangement of red, white and green paper carnations in a lace-paper holder, and presents them to a rich and powerful politician, recently returned from France, who is drinking rum punches with a group of friends. We wonder who is sending the flowers, real flowers "*pour compliment*," beautiful ones that would fade, and paper ones "*pour conserver*," gaudy ones that would last. She hands them over with a flourish. He takes them, thanks her, and tosses them over to a young woman of the party. He continues his noisy talking. The old woman turns away with a quick fling of her *douillette* and a backward glance, obviously pleased with her gesture.

MA'AME DAVID

She stops to talk with Louise, who calls her "Ma'ame David," pronouncing "Ma'ame" in Creole fashion like "Mawm" in English. This term seems reserved for old negro women of a certain dignity.

Only with the promise of a substantial payment can we induce Ma'ame David to pose and when she does consent, she poses very badly. She is much annoyed by people stopping in the street below to watch the painting on the balcony.

"Those people are laughing at me," she says.

"No," the painter replies, "they are laughing at me. They can see you any day, but a lady painting is a curiosity."

"Oh, that is all very well for you to say. You will be gone on the next steamer, but I have to live in this town the rest of my life."

She looks at Louise's gold chains and remarks cynically, "*Trop bijou, gade-mangé vide.*" (Too much jewelry, empty cupboard.)

Another world looks out of Ma'ame David's eyes,—something restless and suspicious. One can imagine malign superstitions from African forests, nourished in the serpent-haunted jungles of Martinique.

"Isn't there a particular name for the design of your dress?" expecting her to say Persian or Cashmere.

Ma'ame David looks up suspiciously, "How did you know that?"

"I *don't* know. What is it?"

"It is *la langue du voisinage.*"

The "neighborhood tongue" of gossip, a pattern which runs on and on endlessly from tongue to tongue. There is a suggestion of reckless gossip in the design, a rakish swish to her turban end, an intimidating assurance in her manner that seems to fit her occupation. She is a peddler who goes about the country with a tray of goods on her head, the usual shallow wooden tray, with an assortment of knick-knacks fascinating to the negresses on the plantations, pinch-beck brooches, hairpins, thread and gay kerchiefs.

Her kerchief is neatly tucked in at her belt, "*plus honnête,*" as Loulouse says, than one with the more coquettish loose ends.

Ma'ame David is paid a ridiculously large amount. She grumbles even at that and says, "But you will sell the picture for much more."

She walks away rather heavily—she is one of the few Martinique women who are overweight,—and as she goes she still grumbles to herself like one nursing a grievance. Even the cheerful Fifine who comes up is greeted with a remark like the flick of a serpent's tongue. As Fifine herself says ruefully, it is worse, "*Coute langue pli mauvé passé mossu*

sèpent." (A lash of the tongue is worse than a serpent's bite.) And Fifine is not unready in the use of verbal weapons.

Fifine, despite her tilt with Ma'ame David, likes her picture.

"I know she is old and ugly," she says, "but there is something about the picture I like. *Il me fait plaisir.*"

Coming back from the market, Ernestine, one of the maids at the hotel, stops for a moment to watch Ma'ame David. Our eyes run over the *carte du jour* in the heaped up tray on Ernestine's head. There is a great lobster, pumpkin for soup, a rainbow-like fish, and a leg of lamb, potato-like *choux caraïbes*, egg-plant, the heart of a palm, breadfruit (it tastes when cooked like a mixture of chestnut and sweet potato), fragrant green-skinned oranges and yellow pawpaws. It is like the end of a horn of plenty with a bouquet of gorgeous flowers on top. No other delivery wagon than the heads of women is known in Martinique and none other is needed.

Ernestine sees the painting going on up on the balcony and comes up to see what it is all about. She becomes interested in the picture, and is quite willing to pose herself.

She seems fetching enough in her smartly tied madras and the *grande robe* she wears every day.

ERNESTINE

"*Mais non*, that would never do. It has been washed many times and is no longer bright enough, but wait till afternoon and I will wear a beautiful *grande robe*, that is if Madame is fond of green."

Madame is willing to take the chance.

It is refreshing to a painter to find models who instantly recognize the superiority of a paint-box over a camera. In the magic box of paints, there is something that can reproduce the joyous clash of color in sunlight, the yellow turban, the gorgeously patterned *douillette* and the vividly contrasting *foulard*. The camera calls them all gray to the great disappointment of the sitters.

* * *

The cathedral bells call out noon, far and near. The midday settles down to its quiet, broken only by the cooing of the *tourtourelle* and the shuffling of bare feet along the hot pavement.

* * *

After the post *déjeuner* lull we begin to look around for Ernestine, who is to meet us on our broad balcony studio. Across the little garden of the patio by the door of the kitchen, Ernestine is being arrayed in the green dress. Two of the other maids are arranging her headdress, a "*tête calendée*."

The *madras calendé* is given the correct tilt over the right eye and the little *provocation*, just the

right slant to the left. Then the two puffs or fluffy braided loops of hair are pinned up on each side of the turban, and another little knob drawn up and pinned at the back. All this requires infinite discussion. Certain points must be just so, according to fixed tradition, other details admit of great display of personal skill and taste. The form of the *madras calendé* is absolutely fixed but there are many ways of arranging the hair, so long as the two supporting bunches at the sides and the little tuck-up in the back are maintained as part of the essential composition. All these effects are difficult to achieve within the limitations of a four-by-six hand mirror.

Finally she is ready. Madame does like the green dress.

"Oh, yes, all my friends are crazy about this dress. I bought it in Trinidad when my mistress was returning from Cayenne. There is nothing like it in Maoutinique."

"Have you ever been to Trinidad? No? What a pity! Never have you seen anything like the shops in Trinidad! Such materials! Such colors!"

She wears a gold pin on which is mounted what seems to be a bit of crêpe.

"Is someone dead?" we ask.

"Oh, no, he is very much alive. It is a lock of my boy's hair. He is four years old."

Like so many of the others, she wishes to go to New York with us.

"Would you leave your boy here?"

"Yes."

"Wouldn't he be lonely?"

"But I would write him such interesting letters from New York."

"Can you write?"

At that she squats down on the floor, holds a piece of paper firmly in place between her two bare big toes. She writes her name and address in a beautiful script, carefully and correctly placing the accents.

Ernestine also is disposed to be critical of her portrait. She doesn't like her *gros bouche* (big mouth). Her big lips look all the bigger as she says "*gwo bouche*." She wishes her skin painted "more French, more golden." Sitters are much the same under any skin.

Fifine who has been busying herself in one way or another about the balcony is the last of our balcony group to be painted. Madame looks at her a bit critically.

"Where is the pretty dress," she asked, "that you had on last night when you were washing wine-bottles at the fountain in the courtyard?"

"But, Madame, this is the same dress."

"It doesn't seem so pretty."

"Ah, Madame, it is the foulard which makes the dress jump." (*Qui fait sauter la robe.*)

When she puts it on we see that it is indeed the yellow silk kerchief which makes the dark green dress "jump."

The humorous, almost sardonic Fifine, is tall, thin, black, of the blackness of Egyptian basalt. Despite her Ethiopian appearance she has a Gallic quality in her ready wit.

After an animated discussion of the pictures our models go about their affairs and leave the balcony to us in peace.

A friendly little jade lizard with ruby eyes crosses the balcony floor with sudden starts and climbs up on the red table. He flicks his tongue at the sticky drops of syrup spilled there in mixing rum punches. He stops dead still, then runs swiftly to the lichen-covered ledge and stands motionless watching a humming-bird hovering over a spray of jasmine. As we idly watch the lizard, a young woman of the pale Maréchal Niel type watches us just as steadily from a window across the street.

We are perspiring, almost panting, in mid-afternoon stillness, when suddenly a strong breeze comes down from the hills, the whole atmosphere is enveloped in a fresh woodsy smell of damp, dark, tropic forests. It seems to have been swept down under a great black cloud.

It is the hour just past the siesta. The palm plumes now sway in the deliciously refreshing breeze. The shadow is thrown across the street. The wide Savane is still in the full blaze of light and the sun's rays still have a sharp edge. Across the blue vault, a stately procession of unbelievably huge cloud masses, white and silver gray, rise from behind the green morne and slowly move toward the myriads of others suspended above the blue Caribbean.

It is getting late afternoon, and we leave our balcony for a stroll down the street. A little door in a high stucco wall opens noiselessly and *La Guêpe* appears. Though her sweetheart is waiting at the corner, she pauses to have her dress admired and is willing to pose. Her lover stands in admiration the while.

She says little and when the posing is over she is glad to go on her way down the street. For us, she is merely a casual passing figure in the street. We do not even know her name. She remains in our minds *La Guêpe* (the wasp), a Creole term for a flirtatious young negro girl of this type. Her dark skin, small waist and yellow calendered turban carry out the suggestion. Yet there is something haunting about her, perhaps her eyes, that seems acutely of Martinique.

She is painted in the little garden of the Biblio-

LA GUÊPE

Christina Mitton

thèque Schoelcher. Entirely by accident there happens to be in her picture at the left side, one of those decorative crotons for which the people of Martinique have a particular affection, a plant they call "*Qui vivra verra.*" (Who lives will see.) *Qui vivra verra* seems to touch some emotional chord in the people. The red and yellow and green are a symbol of the life of Martinique, colorful, strongly growing, luxuriant, exuberant under the heat of the tropical sun. The very name carries with it a sense of the Martinique love of vivid color. From this inborn artistic appreciation of the appeal of color the atmosphere is developed in which these costumes blossom. *La Guêpe* knows that all the street will admire her radiant dress.

* * *

In Martinique the pageant of costume is a real contest for the prize of beauty. In the words of Louise, "*La costume est une lutte.*" (The art of dress is a contest.) The rules of the contest are few and are strictly followed. Only the women, and only the women of colored blood, for these costumes are worn only by them, are the contestants, but nowhere is the game played with greater skill. These costumes are by no means an original development on the part of the negro, but are primarily based upon late eighteenth century peasant costumes of the south of France, where the

fichu approaches the shawl of Spain. They are worn with the same dignity with which peasant costumes are worn in France.

The costume as a whole has the unvarying formal type of a traditional local costume. The *grande robe*, or *douillette*, as the dress is called, is always of one material, usually a gay print. Its characteristic feature is a wide sweeping skirt sewed to a closely fitted waist in the back, falling straight down in front from a square cut yoke, but trimly belted in by two strips attached to the sides of the waist, crossed diagonally in front and pinned, preferably with a gold brooch.

The train of the full skirt is almost invariably carried over the left arm or tucked up under the belt. Now and then one will grasp her full skirt afresh with the left hand and swing it out at arm's length and tuck it under her arm again. The effect is like a peacock spreading its tail, or with some of the varied patterns like the sparkle of a shower of confetti in the sunlight. Once in a while as they go up the aisle of the church, the train is allowed to sweep the floor like the peacock's tail trailed at full-length.

Indirectly, this dress is a legacy of the *grande dame* of the Watteau period. The people of Provence adopted it in the days of Louis XV., and thence it came to Martinique. Many of the

patterns are derived from the court dress of that time. You even see an edging of lace printed around a naturalistic design of roses, pansies or other flowers, in imitation of the ruffles of real lace around medallions of damask appliqué, so frequently worn by great ladies of that period. The stately finery of this costume has made an enduring appeal to the negro women of the French West Indies. It is part and parcel of their admiration for the airs and graces of their mistresses expressed in mimicry of the *grandes dames*.

The neckerchief or *foulard* is an essential part of the costume. Usually it is of silk, folded in exactly the same way and worn in the same way, except that the younger women as a rule do not tuck the ends in their belts. The patterns of the *foulard* are of certain definite types, again derived primarily from Provence. The color is usually in effective contrast with the dresses and chosen with deliberate reference to the color and design of the dress and the color of the wearer's skin.

The third essential feature of the costume is the chic little turban. This is always made of a square of plaid madras, tied with meticulous art. The diagonal folding around the head is simple but exact. In the arrangement of the ends there is the chief opportunity for individuality. These corners of the madras, either two or three, may be

THE TRANSEPT DOOR

pulled out quite broad, or rolled hard and tight and pinned until they are almost pencil-like. Once tied the turban is worn all day long in the house as well as in the street. As Louise says, "If you care how you look you tie your *tête madras* every day." They all care very much how they look. With a square yard of plaid gingham,—but such plaid,—and a pin or two, they make a toque combining the negro love of vivid color with the French instinct for the right line and exactly placed accent.

The calendered turban is made of plaid madras, with much of the design painted over with thick sulphur-yellow paint, pleated in narrow folds over a paper form. It is a stiff little shaped hat of an invariable design and style, which is never re-tied. It is always tipped over the right eye at exactly the same angle. It is more likely to be worn by the middle-aged or elderly than by the young, and more generally on fête days than at other times. With its effect of many tight folds, it is derived from the oriental turban popular in France about the time of the Directory and the First Empire. In this form it is unknown even in the other French islands and is so typical of Martinique that on their postage stamp the young Creole belle wears the *tête calendée.*

An amusing indication of the early efflorescence

of the turban in the French West Indies and of a possible origin of the fashions of arranging the madras ends is found in the "*Mémoires de la Duchesse d'Abrantès*" (Madame Junot). She was consoling Madame Leclerc (Pauline Bonaparte) for the necessity of joining her husband in Santo Domingo by telling her how pretty she would look in a Creole costume, and then arranging turbans for her from bandannas of Indian silks and muslins.

"We chose the prettiest among them," Madame Junot says, "and as my mother had always worn silk handkerchiefs for nightcaps, I was accustomed from my infancy to arranging the corners in the most becoming manner; Madame Leclerc, therefore, when she examined herself in the glass was enraptured with my skill at a *coiffure à la créole*."

To complete the picture of Madame Leclerc one needs only one further sentence from Madame Junot:

"I believe General Leclerc would willingly have dispensed with this addition to his baggage, for it was a positive calamity after the first quarter of an hour's interview had exhausted the pleasure of surveying her really beautiful person, to have the burden of amusing, occupying and taking care of Madame Leclerc."

There must have been French women in Martinique in the days of the Empire just as accustomed

to arranging nightcap turban-ends as Madame Junot. Nor did it require very acute observation on the part of the natives to detect the superiority of such arrangements over an ordinary tieing of a bandanna.

The earliest picture we have seen of a Martinique costume was a miniature from the Collection Bermond-Franck, exhibited in the Napoleon Centenary Exhibition at Malmaison (1921), "*La Fidèle Négresse, Femme de Chambre de Joséphine.*" Josephine's faithful maid wears an olive-green *foulard* and a turban (apparently of plaid madras), salmon-red with a green stripe, the turban ends tied bow-like in front. Her dress is white with a close ruff high around her neck.

It is to Arles, however, that you must go to find out about the origin of the dresses of Martinique. There, in the "*Museon Arlaten,*"—the museum of the life of Provence, endowed by Mistral with his Nobel Prize, and kept alive by the Provençal poets of to-day—and in wardrobes of the beautiful old houses of Arles, you will find the originals of these costumes. You will find very little resemblance in the clothes worn in the streets of Arles to-day, but run through a pile of the old ones laid away in lavender, old *indiennes* of Arles, *foulards* of Cashmere design, dresses with patterns of naturalistic flowers in strong colors, full skirts and turbans,

and you are in Martinique again. A century ago the streets of Arles blazed with color like those of Fort-de-France to-day.

At Arles and elsewhere in the south of France, they began making these cotton prints in the first half of the eighteenth century. The gay colors and patterns which they used then, the French manufacturers still use to-day for their trade in the French West Indies, and also to some extent for Senegal.

The same influence that carried them to the French West African Colonies, probably had something to do with implanting these Provençal costumes in Martinique. For a long period of time the slave-trade between West Africa and Martinique was the monopoly of the house of Maurellet of Marseilles. Though the ships in the slave-trade were among those that came from Provence, it is more likely that the costume of Martinique was brought over by some group of Provençal women rather than in the bales of a chance merchant.

Père Labat, in his "*Nouveau Voyage aux Isles de l'Amérique*," tells a story, almost persuading us that that stalwart soldier priest evoked these costumes himself from the bales of such a merchant.

Père Labat had been telling about the love of the women of Martinique for pretty clothes and about

"moonlight" sugar or indigo, which they had carried away at night by faithful slaves and sold to pay for the things they bought unknown to their husbands or fathers, and continued:

Speaking of gold brocades, I remember, while I was at St. Pierre de la Martinique toward the end of 1704, there arrived a merchant from Lyons who, thinking to make a considerable profit, had taken to Cartagena on the mainland a great quantity of cloth of gold and silver, which is made at Lyons and Marseilles. He hoped to get at least four or five hundred per cent profit. He was mistaken. Messieurs the Spaniards were not in the mood for giving sixty, eighty and a hundred *écus* the yard for his goods, so, after having roamed around the coast of Cartagena and Caracas without selling anything, he finally came on to Martinique with his cargo intact.

He came to the Monastery and brought me several pieces of these beautiful stuffs, thinking I might buy them to make vestments and ornaments for the church. I saw them and they pleased me greatly, but I told him we were not accustomed to buying church ornaments, and that for years we reposed this trust in our Filibusters, who charged themselves with keeping up the decorations of our churches without its costing

them anything—nor us. In fact, they had always been extremely careful in the pillaging of villages or in the capture of vessels to set aside that which they thought suitable for the churches, and to make gifts to those of the towns where they equipped themselves. In the olden days they carried to Tortola all the ornaments and holy vessels of the church of Maracaibo, even to the bells and the copper cock which was on the point of the bell-tower. They have continued to occupy themselves in this manner, and their piety, corresponding to their bravery, we have always had supplies for our churches without buying anything, when they were in the places frequented by the Filibusters.

This statement grieved the Lyonnese merchant greatly. The idea of taking his merchandise back to France did not please him at all, or perhaps he was not in a position to pay for them. His difficulty aroused my pity. I thought a bit of what I might be able to do for him and I told him to leave two of his pieces of silk with me, and that if any one should come to him asking about them, to show only two or three, as if that were all he had.

In the evening, I betook myself to a house where I knew I should find a goodly company of ladies and carried with me these two pieces. I pretended

that some one had asked me to find some beautiful material to make a skirt for a bride, that I had had the good fortune to find these two pieces, on which I wished them to determine the choice I ought to make, because I did not understand enough about this sort of thing.

You may believe that these stuffs were well considered, but they wanted to know for whom they were destined (for curiosity is above all natural to the sex) and I took care not to satisfy them upon this point. They passed in review all the eligible girls in the Quartier, and in all the rest of the island without my saying anything, neither confirming nor denying what they thought; at last they named one, who lived at Cul-de-Sac Marin, that is to say, at twenty good leagues from St. Pierre. I gave a little smile, which made them think that it was for her, and immediately I had the pleasure of hearing them discuss in their best style the family, the property, the quality and the beauty of this poor girl, who thought of nothing less than of being married and putting on such a beautiful skirt. The conclusion of all their discussion was that if such a one could have his daughter wear cloth of gold skirts, they could very well wear them too, and have their children wear them; and immediately they wished to share the two pieces without informing themselves of the

price, nor were they embarrassed at how I should acquit myself of my pretended commission. I had all the trouble in the world to take the material out of their hands, so determined were they on their choice.

When I had got things going so well, I told them the name of the merchant, warning them that if they wanted some of his goods, they must not delay, as he had very little, and perhaps that was already taken.

That was enough. I had not yet arrived at the convent when they were already at the merchant's house. He followed my counsel and showed them a few pieces. It was always these last remaining pieces that pleased them marvelously. That very evening he sold five or six. He came next morning to thank me for the service I had rendered him and in a few days he had disposed very advantageously of all his merchandise.

To-day in Martinique in the shops you see no less interest in clothes. We watch a chocolate-colored giantess as she stops to look critically at some newly arrived squares of madras displayed in the door of the shop "*Au Sans Pareil.*" She goes in and examines them most carefully, evidently weighing the effect of the different patterns and making a mental note of possibilities. Her

own dress has a flamboyant fascination. Broad stripes of dark blue and white with large pink roses *au cœur éclatant* (full-blown with "bursting heart") ribboning the white stripes. A big vermilion kerchief and a turban of magenta, dark red and yellow.

The purchase of a square of madras, now costing as much as ten to eighteen francs is a serious question for a woman whose wages are no more than twenty-five francs a month. She will have to wear it a long time. Fortunately, the headdress will last a long time.

While the calico prints seem dear to them at five and a half to six and a half francs a yard, we find on visiting a dressmaker that the making isn't expensive. The dressmaker personally recommended to us by Sidonie has a good deal of doubt as to the purpose of our errand.

"Do you want it for your maid?" she asks.

"No, for myself."

"But that is impossible."

"I wish to take it to New York to show what the women of Martinique wear." Perceiving a lingering doubt, Madame adds, "I might use it as a costume at a masquerade."

That seems to provide an intelligible reason. Though this dress is now distinctively a negro costume, these Gallic negro women through their

appreciation of the sheer beauty of color and design have kept it a robe of pride and dignity.

"How much will you charge for making it?"

"Do you want me to furnish the thread?"

"Yes."

"Then I can't tell you. Thread is very dear now."

Not without misgiving, we decide to take a chance.

The sewing woman becomes very much interested in showing us just how the dress should be worn and how the skirt is swung out, flipped over and tucked up. The bread vendor, who comes in to deliver the bread, the ends of the long loaves sticking up out of the huge basket on her head, cries out in astonishment, "What is this! A *béké*" (white person) "going to wear a *créole* costume!"

When the dressmaker's little boy comes to our hotel with the dress, he brings an apology for the charge of half a franc for the thread, making the total bill five and a half francs. This with francs worth between six and seven cents!

* * *

We leave the dressmaker's just as the setting sun dyes with saffron a great cloud hanging above the morne, transfiguring the little *Calvaire* at the summit.

In the distance we can hear the drummer at the Jardin Desclieux beating his lively tattoo as he parades up and down the garden walks, just the way the drummer does in the Luxembourg Garden, shooing out the children.

Down the street, a noisy group of women coal-heavers come almost running,—laughing, skylarking, pushing against each other, grimy with sweat and coal-dust. A rowdy group just come from a hard day's work coaling ship, now on their way to market to buy food for supper. Black skirts kilted up short with a bit of string. Black, old, ugly, with lean ankles and knobby calves, yet they too each have a dress radiant in beautiful colors, ready to wear to-morrow at church.

As we walk on toward the Savane the street is filled with a clear golden light. The cathedral bells give their sonorous benediction, the greater deep-toned bells dominating. The full moon just rising shines through the decorative foliage of a breadfruit tree and sparkles on the palm branches.

We walk along the broad alleys of the Savane, watching the promenade in the cool of the evening. Along the waterfront the heavy interlacing foliage of the trees is black above the silver of the calm bay in the western light.

Some of the older women are carrying open umbrellas. We suppose it is to protect them from

L'IMPÉRATRICE

the brilliant rays of the moon, but someone tells us it is the "*serein*," an imaginary chill mist falling out of the clear sky, that they are afraid of. Nursemaids with their young charges in their arms are shielding them with open umbrellas.

The little steamer from Marin has just arrived. Along the pier a crowd of people jostle each other with the usual haste of arriving travellers. The women are carrying all sorts of luggage, produce and household goods on their heads. One of them balancing a large basket leads a kid with one hand and a baby with the other.

The cafés are bright with lights and groups of people. Friends stop to chat as they meet. The life of the French people here seems like that of a town in the south of France. The dwindling French population, so few in number, compared to the negroes, remains tenaciously French.

The moon is now well above the black morne and has transformed the huge cloud range in the north into snowy mountains far vaster than the Himalayas.

Whiter than ever in the moonlight, the Empress, —Josephine is always "*l'Impératrice*" here,— reigns in marble, a beautiful and significant monument. The tall palms set in a circle around this lovely figure sway like black ostrich plumes.

The statue is almost idolized by the women

here. They once saved it from destruction at the hands of republican officials, who, after the fall of the Second Empire, wished to destroy all memory of the Bonapartes. When the politicians and their workmen approached the statue at sunrise with ropes and scaffolding to tear it down, they found a crowd of determined women all armed with newly sharpened cane-knives. Josephine was to them the beautiful young mistress to whom they were loyal unto death. The workmen fled. The politicians vowed always to protect it and the women of Martinique will see that they do.

A replica of this statue, also by Vital Dubray, which once stood in Paris, in the Avenue de l'Impératrice, now the Avenue du Bois-de-Boulogne, had no such loyal defenders.

We walk back along the street amusing ourselves watching the patterns and colors of the shadows in the moonlight, the shadows of the palm branches, of the balconies; orange in the street lamplight, yellow white with moonlight and lamplight, and everywhere blue white moonlight. The palm branches, sharp and black against the light-flooded sky, glisten as if set with polished mirrors.

* * *

After dinner,—the cooking here is Provençal, too,—we watch the street from our balcony. Out

of the shadow two women and a child with bundles on their heads suddenly appear. They stop at a black doorway and put their burdens down. One goes in and presently comes out and all wait silently. The younger woman, in red, leans listlessly against the wall as if ill or very tired. After a while two old women and some children come out with great bundles on their heads and disappear noiselessly down the street. The waiting group go into the house just as silently. Both groups seem to be hiding utter dejection in the night.

Martinique goes to bed early. To-night, however, is Saturday night and there is a moving picture show at the Hôtel-de-Ville and a dance at the Casino. With all that, there are very few people in the street. It is so quiet that in the distance you can hear every word of the torrent of abuse from a quarrelsome negro woman.

A young man stops beneath a window on the corner. He whistles a melody for all the world like a nightingale's song. No answer. He throws a pebble at the window. Still no answer. He goes down the street toward the Casino.

A sudden shower of rain comes. As it passes the copper-red arch of a strong lunar rainbow shows against the gigantic cloud.

Somewhere a bugler blows a call a bit lamely and nearer at hand comes an answering whistle

sharp and clear, "Some day I'm going to murder the bugler," then singing "*Zhonai sac au dos, sac au dos*" and ending in resonant voice with the challenge of "*Par là-bas*" (Over There).

Little groups of people come home from the Hôtel-de-Ville. The flow of water in the fountain in the patio begins its nocturnal rushing and splashing, seeming to gain strength as the night goes on.

In the stillness we can hear the rhythmic throbbing of music from the Casino. They are singing as they dance. Songs of old carnivals at St. Pierre. They seem built on French tunes but with the throb of the tom-tom, the smash of the *cha-cha*, the heat of the tropics. The song rises with some strong voice and dies away.

A little past midnight the silence is broken by a sudden chorus, as if aroused by an invisible director, of cocks crowing, echoing and re-echoing over the town and far out into the country. As it dies away in the distance, we suddenly recall that this is the Land of Ghosts. No wonder the cocks crow so lustily at midnight.

Then there is not a sound except the whisper of the breeze and the talking of the fountain.

At early dawn the clanging melody of the cathedral bells fills the town with swelling fortissimo in unrelenting command for a full quarter of an hour.

The voices of the bells die away like ebbing waves on a beach, no longer overlapping.

Out of the distance, a clear voice calling "*Frais coco! Frais coco!*" seems to dispel the last veils of dawn like an incantation, and forth strides a vendor of cocoanuts. With the characteristic swift, graceful, easy stride of a Martinique *porteuse*, she has carried for miles the huge burden of cocoanuts piled high in the basket on her head.

A shuttered window rattles, a servant opens a door and helps lower the basket to the ground. The vendor pulls out a cocoanut by its tough yellow cord-like stem, chops a hole quickly through its smooth light green skin and white woody husk and pours out the milk, the early morning drink of Martinique.

She swings up her basket and stands a moment, straight and strong in her faded dress of pale yellow with big blue morning-glories and her red kerchief, waiting for her money before she turns and walks rapidly away, calling out, "*Frais coco!*" There is in her cry, the haunting, plaintive melody of the turtle-dove.

You rub your eyes at this song of Pippa, passing down the street, arousing dreamers to the life of the day. Whether she is one of Martinique's "returning spirits" or no, her cry awakened the street when Fort-de-France was Fort-Royal.

Josephine, at Malmaison; Aimée, in the Seraglio on the Golden Horn; Françoise, at Versailles; Hortense, in her palace at the Hague; awaking at dawn, half-dreaming, half-remembering, with the echo of that caressing long-drawn-out call in their ears, must have wondered as the echo died away whether they were not in Martinique again, and the incredible parts they were playing in history only a dream.

Not alone the sounds and feeling of the tropical morning remain the same they knew; the street itself is still Rue St. Louis, despite another name they have painted on the signs, and the life of the street still the same,—an eddy of life left far at one side by the main current sweeping on,—a pageant of yesterday.

THE PAGEANT OF THE ROAD

III

THE PAGEANT OF THE ROAD

Mône pas k'encontré; moune k'encontré toujou.
(Mornes [hills] never meet; people are always meeting again.)
Martinique Proverb.

THE roads of Martinique unroll a gorgeous and fantastic panorama. Volcanic peaks and lava dikes luxuriantly overwhelmed with densest greenness. Hanging gardens flung across the face of precipices; yellow green in the sunlight against the luminous haze of azure shadows; black green in the depths and blacker in the depths beyond. Deep torrent-hewn valleys hung with tree-ferns and great golden aigrettes of bamboo. Emerald valleys stretching far under the flame of the sun to a sapphire sea.

Such a valley is that of the Rivière Case Navire. The road to it pierces a mountain barrier by a tunnel, a long cave-like passage burrowed through the lava ridge. This unexpected entrance is in itself intimidating. The sudden emergence from the gloom into a valley of fairy-land bathed in golden sunset-light is nothing less than awe-inspir-

ing. At Delphi the Castalian ravine at dusk with the cold breath of Parnassus pouring down upon you through the deep mountain cleft, the ruins with their memories of mystery, the great valley opening below you, is eerie, but this valley is a secret place remote and unreal, bewitched by some mysterious spell.

A gorge running in deep swales of varied greenery from the volcanic cones of the Pitons of Carbet down to the sea and the setting sun, it has more than wildly romantic beauty, it is an unearthly vision. In the rapidly changing light, the shadows grow blacker under the green cascades of foliage. Rushing torrents flash in the light a moment at the little bridges before they plunge again into blackness.

Everywhere in the quick gathering of night, goblin shapes of twisted roots and swaying vines, red ferns and weird orchids, grow more monstrous. Great trees stoop under crushing burdens of lianas, enviously pulling them to earth. Curtains of foliage conceal a mysterious world where the only lights are the fireflies, a world full of life, resounding with the noises of the night-emboldened jungle. Through the leafy covering comes a damp breath, awakening indefinable, exotic memories, odors stirring nerve-vibrations long asleep. Frangipanni? Or ylang-ylang? One night four and

twenty years ago and twelve thousand miles away in a Visayan jungle, black and deadly, there was an ylang-ylang tree alight with fireflies.

Weird elusive forms take shape in the blackness, things Doré painted and Dante dreamed of. The road is now over-arched in the smothering embrace of the heavy growth enclosing us in the utter blackness of the tropical jungle at night. In the cavernous gloom you are somehow suddenly aware of barefoot figures gliding by without a sound your ear can detect. It must be the impact of a bare foot on the ground you feel in your body, or the stir of the air in passing, lighter than the breath of a sigh. Then come to your mind tales of the ghosts of runaway prisoners and of hunters who have gone into these woods never to return, of the death lurking in the wilderness that killed them, the *fer-de-lance*, wicked as the cobra. The evil spirits of the forest seemed to gather about us. There in the shadow we feel the *zombi* following us step by step.

The road, still soft from the afternoon rain, threatens to give way with the weakened support of bamboo stakes at a narrow point jutting out above an abyss, pitchy black as the very pit of the valley of the shadow of death. The road leads on into the forest becoming more treacherous and at last disappears, leaving us in trackless night.

On our return even the welcome tunnel seems a

dragon's lair. At the entrance we look back and there just above the black shoulder of the mountain beyond the valley is the still, steady beam of a planet hung low like a great lantern. We have the sensation of escaping some impending doom. The feeling of relief seems absurd, the road is just as dark for a long way before we reach the pleasant homes of Plateau Didier. We are sure, however, that there are better ways of acquiring merit than by making again that journey at night just to demonstrate that the valley is not really enchanted.

Though we have seen nothing to shake our own incredulity, after such a night we appreciate the conviction of the people that the ghostly legends they tell are real. The tale of the disappearance of the Comte de Dillon is not more mysterious than many another such incident, but to listen to it as told one evening during the rapid gathering of tropical night by a lady, to whom it was told by her own father, one of the guests of the tragic dinner party,—that is a very different thing from reading it in print.

We shall, however, attempt to repeat the story, following her own words as nearly as we can.

Monsieur le Comte de Dillon, a bachelor, was the proprietor of a plantation which still bears his name near Fort-de-France in the quarter called Rivière-

Monsieur. He was one of the famous French family of Irish descent of that name. A most affable man, highly regarded by every one, he took an important part in the official and social life of the Colony.

About 1854 or 55, wishing to show the esteem in which he held his neighbors, the proprietors and farmers of the plantations near his, he invited them to a dinner of twenty covers.

They were just about to go in to dinner, the waitress was serving the soup, when one of the maids came to tell the master of the house, that a messenger, just arrived on horseback, had brought a note which he was charged to deliver into the hands of M. le Comte himself. The Count excused himself to his guests and went out to meet the messenger, who had remained with his horse outside the big iron entrance gate in the wall enclosing the broad lawn which surrounded the house.

You know how short the twilight is here, it was already very dark when the Comte de Dillon left the house, so dark that his guests were unable to follow him with their eyes to the gate.

The conversation continued in his absence and the time did not seem long to the convivial party which awaited his return. In the meantime the waitress came into the drawing-room to seek her master and warn him that the soup was getting

cold, and only then his friends, realizing the length of his absence, began to fear that he had received bad news. They went into the adjoining room which served as his office, but it was dark. All the other rooms to which he might have retired were also unlighted, and it was then they began to fear that something was wrong. They called the servants, armed them with torches and searched the house and the grounds. No trace was found of M. le Comte de Dillon.

Aroused, and fearing a crime, although no one in the whole island had any grievance against him, they sent messengers to notify the various officials, all of whom had a warm regard for the man who had disappeared. In the meantime, each returned to his own plantation, sounded the alarm and aroused all the people to continue the search along the roads and in the cane-fields. The search became general, but unhappily without result.

On their part, the authorities of the Colony, soldiers and police, made every effort to aid in the search. The custom-house officers searched every vessel leaving the shores of the island. Rewards were offered, the search was continued for a month, but nothing was found.

The maid who had received the rider who came with the message had not been able to distinguish his features in the darkness and could give only a

vague description. No one ever knew what became of M. le Comte de Dillon.

We suppose that this Comte de Dillon was related to the charming Madame La Tour du Pin, the author of the *Memoirs of a Woman of Fifty*, and to Madame Bertrand, the wife of Napoleon's companion at St. Helena, General Bertrand.

Of the multitude of weird stories in Martinique, many must have sprung from the credulous and superstitious mind of the negro to whom such fairy-tales are as real as to a child. Lafcadio Hearn tells some of them vividly in his *Two Years in the French West Indies*. The better you know the island the more you marvel at his sympathetically clairvoyant chronicling of the life there.

Père Labat in his *Nouveau Voyage* relates a story which gives an insight into the minds of the slaves of that time, the end of the seventeenth century, just brought over from Africa:

An Englishman living in the island of Saint Kitts, called Major Crips, was more fortunate than I in preventing the suicide of his negroes. As this man was very severe with them, the number of his slaves diminished every day. They hung themselves one after another. He was finally warned by one of his employees that all his negroes had

resolved to run away to the woods the next day and there to hang themselves—the whole company—in order to return to their own country together.

He saw plainly that words and chastisements would only defer for a few days the carrying-out of their resolution and that he required a remedy which would have some bearing on the malady of their imagination. He instructed his white servants as to what they had to do and ordered them to load the cauldrons for sugar and brandy on the wagons, with all the other apparatus of a sugar factory and to follow him.

He went into the woods. There he found his negroes arranging the ropes to hang themselves. He approached them holding a rope in his hand, told them to fear nothing, that he had learned of the resolution they had taken to return to their own country, and that he wished to accompany them because he had bought a large plantation there, where he wished to establish a sugar-mill, where they would be much better qualified than negroes who had never worked in a sugar-mill; that, having no more fear that they could run away he would make them work day and night without giving them a holiday either on Saturday or Sunday; that the overseer he had sent ahead had written him that he had captured those who had hung themselves first and, while awaiting his

orders, he had made them work with irons on their feet. On top of this, the loaded wagons having appeared, the negroes no longer doubted the resolution of their master, especially since he urged them to hang themselves, feigning that he was only waiting for that to hang himself and go with them. He had even chosen his tree and attached the rope. The negroes then commenced to talk among themselves. The thought of the misery of their companions intimidated them as well as the resolution of their master. They came and threw themselves at his feet, and promised him to think no more of returning to their country and begged him to bring their comrades back. For some time he was unwilling, but finally his white servants and his employees having also gone on their knees to ask the same favor, the agreement was made on condition that if a single one hung himself, all the others would be hung the next day to go to work in the new sugar-mill in Guinea. This they agreed to with a solemn oath, taking a little earth on their tongues, after raising their eyes and their hands to heaven and striking their breasts. They pretend by this ceremony to pray God to reduce them to dust like the earth on their tongue if they do not execute that which they have promised or if they do not speak the truth.

Major Crips returned home very pleased with

the success of his stratagem. The negroes kept their word and did not hang themselves any more; I do not know whether this adventure rendered him more moderate.

For a foil to this, another episode from Père Labat,—a seventeenth century gasconade:

It was a short time before we arrived at Santo Domingo, that a Gascon gentleman, or one calling himself such, won a wife by force without justice being able to find fault therewith. They told us the story. It is too singular not to be related here just as it was told to us. I add nothing to it of my own.

This gallant gentleman, whose name I shall dispense with mentioning, having heard of the generosity of M. du Casse, sought him out, doubting not that he would do for him what he had done for an infinite number of others. He told him the usual story. That he was a gentleman who had squandered his property in the service of the King, but not having had the good fortune to be promoted as he merited and being no longer in a position to continue to serve, he had been obliged to leave France, and to come to seek his fortune in the Colonies. That, knowing the kindness of M. du Casse, he hoped that he would procure for him

some means of rehabilitating himself in a condition to continue his services and if need be to sacrifice his life for his Prince.

M. du Casse offered him his table and his house, while waiting until he should find some occasion to render him service. He told him to see the country and discover what would be suitable for him.

Our gentleman saw a number of planters who possessed many negroes and, as Gascony is the land of inventions more than of letters of credit, he proposed to M. du Casse to induce all the great planters to give him or to lend him one negro apiece. For, he said, the labor on their plantations will not be diminished by one negro the less and when I have fifty or sixty I shall be in a position to have a good plantation and to re-establish my affairs.

M. du Casse who wished to amuse himself proposed this expedient to a large company who were dining with him, and, not noticing any one in a mood for giving, he said to the Gascon that he must dream of something else, without hurrying however, for his house was always at his service; that he advised him only to choose well; and that if he had any inclination for matrimony a gentleman never failed to find considerable advantages in this country.

This prospect pleased the Gascon. He began his

campaign. He sought, he found, and resolved to try his luck. He told M. du Casse that he had found a nest, that the bird would perhaps be difficult to surprise, but that, counting on his protection, he hoped to succeed.

This bird was an elderly widow of Dieppe who had accumulated the spoils of six or seven husbands and her nest was a beautiful estate, well supplied with negroes and with everything that could make a rich person highly respected. It was between Esterre and Little Cul-de-Sac.

The Gascon having thought out his plan carefully, departed dressed in his handsomest clothes, mounted on a horse of M. du Casse. He passed by this estate just about dinner-time. He entered under the pretext of seeking shelter from a drop of rain. He paid his compliments to the old lady in a manner which gave her all the more pleasure since it had been so long since she had heard anything so charming and spirited.

She kept him for dinner according to the custom. While they were at table, he did not fail to pay court to her in his best style and he remarked with joy that his charms did not displease the old lady. He asked for his horse some time after they had left the table and, going into the kitchen under some pretext, he distributed some money among the servants who were at once won to his interests.

The old lady noticed that he was forgetting his boots as he mounted his horse. One must understand that he had had his boots taken off before going to the table. She reminded him of them; but he responded that he was leaving with her quite another thing than his boots, and he doubted if he could ever recover it. The old lady understood what he meant and was pleased.

He departed and slept under some pretext or other at a planter's a couple of leagues away. He did not fail to return the day after at the same hour that he had come the preceding day. The servants, won over by his liberality, hastened to inform their mistress of his arrival and to take his horse. Immediately he entered the room where the lady was and said, after having greeted her, "Madame, do not think for a moment I have come back to take away that which I left yesterday with you. It is no longer mine. You are its mistress forever."

The old lady, thinking or feigning to think he spoke of his boots, thanked him, and said they were of no use to her and immediately told a maid to fetch them. But the Gascon said he was not talking of boots, that it was his heart that he had left with her, that it was so contented here that it did not seem as if it wished to go away, and that things being so, it was only right that he should stop

where his heart had fixed its dwelling. He continued to converse in this tone during dinner, and all afternoon. Night approaching, the old lady said to him that, whenever he wished, they would bring him his horse.

"*Hé!* why do that, Madame?" he said, "my heart will never leave here. It is made for yours. I should be attempting the impossible if I tried to separate them. In plain French, Madame," he continued, "this signifies that I love you, and I believe you have too good taste not to return the like by becoming my wife." Up to this time the sweet phrases of the Gascon had pleased the old lady, but the word marriage frightened her. She became serious. She even became a bit angry. The Gascon without being disconcerted continued his *fleurettes*, and swore at last that he would not set foot outside the house until he was her husband.

They supped, and although the old lady appeared to be in a bit of ill humor, he did not cease to hold forth about his love and to try to persuade her that she loved him but that she only wished to consider before declaring it. After supper he found a chamber ready, where he retired after having conducted the old lady into hers and wishing her good night.

He knew from the servants that a certain merchant from Nantes named Gourdin was making

love to their mistress, that the affair was well advanced and that he was due to come to see her the following morning. He concluded from this news that the ill humor in which he had found the old lady had no other foundation than this, and he resolved to disembarrass himself of M. Gourdin.

When it was day and the lady had risen, he entered into conversation with her while waiting for M. Gourdin, and when he saw him, he placed himself in the doorway of the house with a big stick (*maître bâton*) beside him. M. Gourdin, having dismounted from his horse, was a bit surprised to see a man in galon and plume in the door of his intended. He approached nevertheless in a submissive manner. But the Gascon, raising his voice, "What are you looking for, Monsieur?" he said, "Whom do you wish?"

"Monsieur," the merchant of Nantes humbly responded, "I wish to speak to Madame N. N."

"To Madame N. N." replied the Gascon. "You are mistaken, it is to me that one must speak at present. By chance, are you not Monsieur Gourdin?"

"Yes, Monsieur," said the merchant, "at your service."

"Oh, learn, little merchant of Nantes, that Madame N. N. is made for a gentleman like me and not for a Pocrin like you." Pocrin is a term

of contempt given especially to rascally people of Nantes. "You are Monsieur Gourdin (club), and here is Monsieur Bâton (taking the stick in one hand and his sword in the other), who gives notice to you, that if you ever have the audacity to think of Madame N. N. he will break you—arms and legs."

Without further compliment he commenced to beat him severely. The old lady rushed out to prevent the disorder; but Monsieur Bâton, who continued his beating constantly, obliged Monsieur Gourdin to fly to the side of his horse. The negro who was holding it let go the bridle and fled, from fear of having his share in the distribution that his master was receiving. The horse did the same and Monsieur Gourdin ran after both of them, always accompanied by Monsieur Bâton, until the swiftness of his legs put him beyond the sphere of Monsieur Bâton's activity.

The Gascon triumphant, returned slowly from his expedition, and throwing the stick down with a fistful of coin, "*Voilà,*" he said, "*pour le maître du bâton* for it is just to recompense those who have taken part in the vengeance of Madame."

Then addressing himself to the old lady who was angry or pretended to be, "There, Madame, a sample of what I shall do for you and how I shall treat those who lack respect for you. I did not

push matters to the end in order that this unfortunate wretch might be witness to my moderation and at the same time an example to hold to their duty other rash ones such as he."

Our Gascon took care to notify M. du Casse of what had happened and he wound himself round the heart of the old lady so well that the Sunday following the bans were published and they were married on Monday, having made each to the other a gift *inter-vivos* of all their property, present and future. The sad part of all this adventure is that M. Gourdin was not able to survive the loss of his mistress. He took to his bed the day after the marriage and died in less than five or six days.

This marriage created a great stir in the island and the diligence with which it had been concluded surprised every one. The neighbors of the old lady having expressed their astonishment to her, she said with the naïveté natural to the ladies of Dieppe, "*Hé! Que diable voulez vous?* I had to marry to get this Gascon out of the house; for he had sworn never to leave it until I did."

They say that the ghost of Père Labat himself haunts the island. At any rate he would still feel at home here in the land he loved and from which he was exiled, no one knows just why. His descriptions of the roads he travelled fit the same roads

to-day. Not only do the vistas of morne and mountain peak change but little with the centuries, even the cane-fields and bamboo huts, half-hidden in luxuriant vegetation, are the same.

In Martinique, more insular even than most islands, the life of the street changes slowly and the life of the road changes even more slowly. It goes on in much the same way despite the fact that the *poste diligence* is now a Ford.

The *porteuses* on the road to-day are not different from those of the past. These women carry their heavy burdens on their heads with the same grace and vigor that have amazed travellers these last two hundred years.

As we start out in the cool of the morning on "*La Trace*," the old "Trail" to St. Pierre, the *porteuses* are bringing in to the market their baskets of mangoes, vegetables, alligator pears, oranges, cocoanuts, corossols, breadfruit. Barefooted, over these cruelly stony roads, they carry the heavy baskets mile after mile. They come in groups laughing and talking, or one passes as silently and swiftly as the ghostly *Guiablesse*.

For miles after leaving Fort-de-France, the road climbs steadily, with wide views over the bay and south to the mountains of Vauclain. In the distance, as we climb northward, a brilliant sea at the other side of the island, the Atlantic, flashes in the

sun and we can see the white sand of the little islands in the Harbor of Robert.

Everywhere the overpowering greenness wreathes itself about gorge and mountain peak. The little hotel in the valley of Absalon, to which people go for baths in the hot springs, seems a primitive outpost in the jungle in danger of destruction by the terrific tropical vegetation.

As the road winds in and out following the furrows of torrent after torrent on the mountain sides in the wild region dominated by the peaks of Carbet, these three peaks vary their outline with every turn. Then adding to their picturesqueness, the sun leaves them and swirling clouds fling themselves at their summits. The wind rises suddenly, the clouds sweep lower. Bursts of rain dash out the blaze of the sun. Like a curtain the clouds roll back now and then and show weird dramatic glimpses of tall pyramidal peaks, black gorges and startling precipices, fantastic elemental bulks arising out of chaos.

The wind no longer purrs with its accustomed gentleness. Its growl approaching a roar brings shivering fear of the hurricane's tiger scream. Here the very word "hurricane" itself was born. With tornado suddenness the storm lashes itself to a climax of fury. At that weird and appalling moment the terrific thunderstorm bursts upon us

from the sinister peaks of Carbet. Walls of torrents enclose us. The heavens are split with strokes of lightning. The weight of the down-pour crashes through the curtains of the car. The forest offers no shelter. We struggle to a wayside shack at Fonds St. Denis.

There during the height of the tempest, with lightning still flashing about us, the salvos of thunder echoing from the mountain sides, rain crashing relentlessly, we watch the *porteuses*, barefooted, oblivious to the torrential cataclysm, striding along the road, or coming down the slippery mountain path which reaches the road under a great mango tree. One carries a bushel basket of breadfruit, one a huge pile of palm branches for thatching, another a basket of mangoes, another a basket of cocoanuts. In their thin, clinging, wet drapery they have the figure of the black caryatid of the Erectheion, or the even more graceful figure of the free-striding Diana. Such strength and hardihood make us in our shelter seem very soft and over-housed.

One of them puts down her basket of breadfruit to tuck up her skirt,—with the rain it had become unkilted—and it takes two to lift the basket up and put it on her head again. She walks off with an easy swing. On these slippery paths in the rain one can see how much surer is the bare foot

than the shod. No wonder these women have no competition as the really dependable means of getting things from place to place on the island. A young girl brings eggs to the shack, they are in her big straw hat inverted like a basket on top of her head. She wrings the water out of her drenched wisp of a dress, black as her skin. Her clinging garments make you believe that Greek sculptors used rain-drenched models to get such folds of drapery.

The shack is a shop with a little counter where tobacco and canned things and a few odds and ends are displayed for sale. The old woman who keeps the place is talking with an old man from somewhere in the neighborhood, waiting for the rain to pass.

We ask if he had lived here at the time of the eruption of Le Pelé,—St. Pierre is just below us.

"Yes, I lived near Fonds St. Denis at the time of the catastrophe."

They always call it *la catastrophe.*

"What was it like?"

"It was the doom of God. The heat shrivelled you up."

"But," he continued after a pause, "what rings still in my ears, is the frightful cry which rose all at once for one second from the thousands, yes, tens of

thousands, of people in St. Pierre who perished at a single blast of fire from Le Pelé."

The old woman made the sign of the cross and they ceased talking.

Finally the old woman added, "Yet, as I think of it now the strangest thing of all is that the people did not take warning when the *fer-de-lance* fled from the mountain down through the streets of the town. It is true that the mountain had shaken before, and belched forth smoke, but never before had the serpents fled from it."

As we descend the winding road into St. Pierre, the last curtain of rain sweeps out across the sea under the magnificent arch of a rainbow. The air is almost suddenly still as if exhausted with the violence of the storm. The bay settles to rest in blue smoothness. Dolphins are playing in the distance. They love to play in the bay of St. Pierre and here they play with wonderful spirit. They toss their great bodies in smashing somersaults. Without a perceptible effort, they race with the curving crests of the waves pushed out by a passing steamer. In their back-flopping skylarking they seem to feel the athlete's joy in happy exercise, in friendly competition.

Dolphins leaping in sunlight, cleaving, smashing the blue water, frolicking in companionable groups, playing with the joy of the lark that sings as he

circles higher and higher. We watch them playing in the distance and find ourselves smiling and forgetting that we are in St. Pierre.

We drive down the long street of Victor-Hugo on the old well-laid pavement. We pass the old fountains, playing again joyfully as ever. The canals and the fountains were so well built nearly a hundred and fifty years ago that they required only a clearing out after the great catastrophe to start flowing again as abundantly as ever with the clear, sweet, cool water of the mountain. They used to say that when the fountains ceased their murmuring the city was plunged in silence and sadness.

We catch a glimpse of the sea at the end of a street as narrow as the narrowest in Arles. There, we can trace the shell of a solidly built house and here, within the walls of a great house is built a little hovel with a bit of tesselated pavement cleared before the door. Here are untouched acres and there houses rebuilt on the old walls, with the old street numbers and names.

Many of the streets are cleared, their pavements and sidewalks undamaged. Shops are collecting about the same main street corners. The market is gathering again. The bay is full of fish. The cane-fields flourish. For a long time only a few people came timidly. Now there are several thousand. On the hillside there are villas em-

bowered in flowering plants. The living kin of the dead are coming back, the life of the city is creeping in again, just as the life of the jungle creeps over a clearing. The same forces that built St. Pierre are building it again. In another fifty years the city will again be lovely and gay.

We go on down the street past the ruins of the Cathedral, the *palais de justice*, past the jail (where the one lone survivor, a negro prisoner, was dug from his dungeon) to the bank of the Roxelane.

The river as sparkling as ever dashes its torrent into the sea. It always has. It always will. The Martinique proverb "*La riviè ka allé dans lamè*" (the river flows into the sea)—nature takes its course—may have been first said of the Roxelane. The fury of La Montagne Pelée did not upset the everyday forces of nature. Hearn said, "The great voice of the Roxelane will sing on when the city itself shall have ceased to be, just as it sang one hundred thousand years ago."

Roxelane is an intriguing name, a rare name. Whence it came no one knows. They tried unsuccessfully more than two hundred years ago to change her name to the Rivière St. Pierre. Who knows? Perhaps Pierre Dubuc named it Roxelane for the slave and Valideh Sultan of the Ottomans who reigned three hundred years and more before his own blood succeeded to that title.

Travellers had long wondered why the name Le Pelé (the Bald) had been applied to a mountain as completely covered with verdure as it had been for so long before the last eruption. After the eruption, the answer came. The mountain was again bald. Now the green life is creeping to the summit.

In St. Pierre, La Montagne Pelée is always before you, at the end of the street, at every turn of the road. In the dead calm after the storm, the sea is flat, the last clouds are far on the horizon, and now we have the rare spectacle of the cyclopean battlements of the summit free from clouds, not even a wisp of haze or a breath of smoke. It seems a fortress of lava dominating the bay and city. The splintered and jagged edges of the crater look as if a huge summit cone of hard glass had been broken across with an incredible blow.

This uncanny, dream-like stillness seems an unreal momentary calm. The terror of the past and the terror of the future to come have more than a subconscious reality.

We ask Madame, our hostess at the little restaurant where we have *déjeuner*, if she is not afraid of Le Pelé.

"Not for myself, or my children,—for my grandchildren, who knows?" she replies, as she brings our *vin de Graves*. "The mountain has

been quiet now for a long time. The next time they will leave when the fire first blazes up."

The human mind worries as little about problems that far away as it does about the molten heart of the earth. As she speaks however she glances involuntarily toward the summit to make sure that the mountain really is quiet.

Even at the summit the air is still, the bamboo plumes growing again on the curving slopes of the old *Jardin des Plantes* are not stirred, the earth seems solid to the stamp of your foot, but as you look at these people who have come to St. Pierre to live, you can see they know that again the earth will rock and the flaming mountain burst its cauldron of death. Life is not yet full-hearted at St. Pierre.

The little restaurant our chauffeur chooses for us,—we feel somehow the usual deceit of the local Jehu in its selection—is unprepossessing. We are the more surprised when the luncheon proved as delicious as if served on the Cannebière in Marseilles. *Hors d'œuvres*, soup, such as only the French can make, fish, just out of the sea, with a wonderful sauce, an *omelette au rhum*, blazing in blue flame, to say nothing of the pleasant white wine of Bordeaux. Among other French graces, not the least they have learned in Martinique is to cook.

After such a meal it is not difficult to imagine the

frame of mind of the light-hearted people of St. Pierre who heeded so little the many portents of disaster. A boy brings some wine bottles to sell, softened and flattened by heat, encrusted with white volcanic ash, once ordinary *bouteilles à vin blanc*, now with an iridescent luster as lovely as Phœnician glass. Only stones and bits of metal and pieces of pottery and glass endured through the flames.

At the wharf we watch the fountain playing, and the little group of people gathered there. Here the people watched the sailing of the *d'Estrées* the very day of the eruption. This was the ship that carried the little doll "Joséphine," now in the doll collection at the Trocadéro in Paris. She had been dressed by children in one of the schools. As the ship bearing the doll was sailing these little girls and their mothers gathered at the wharf and sang "*Adieu madras, adieu foulards*," the old Martinique song of farewell to the sailor lover.

The next day St. Pierre was no more and all the "little mothers" of the doll were dead.

We found no little brown-faced dolls in the shops of Martinique. An enterprising young woman who kept a book-shop in Fort-de-France obtained one for us. The passing of these dolls, carefully dressed in the costume, bodes ill for the future of the Martinique costume.

About the villas of St. Pierre, the yellow, red and green of *Qui vivra verra* (Who lives will see) is growing. In the cemetery, singularly desolate in its partly exhumed ruin, the green and gold *Qui mourra saura* (Who dies will know) is aglow in the sunlight. The poignant names of these brilliant foliage plants express the heart of La Martinique.

We ascend the valley of the Roxelane by a road with wide sweeping views of the great mountain to Morne Rouge, the scars of its church still eloquent of destruction, then down to the easterly side of the island. Again a road of jungle and mountain and torrent. We pass the hamlet of Ajoupa-Bouillon, which might be anywhere in the tropics, but for a glimpse we have a dignified old Frenchman in pink brocaded silk pajamas and embroidered black velvet cap, leaning on a gold-headed cane.

When we obtain a view to the north, in the golden distance we see the peaks of Dominica, pale blue of the Italian primitives, a vision of ineffable beauty. The road runs on by the sea. We pass a submerged peak of an island, a Böcklin "Isle of the Dead," and promontories like those in Japanese prints. Jagged gray cliffs jutting out into the sea with the ultramarine waves breaking into white fringe at their foot.

At the ford of the Rivière Falaise where the old bridge was broken down long ago, we find the usually shallow stream, now a torrent from the morning's storm on Le Pelé. The turbid flood is tearing heavy stones from its bed and tossing them along. The Ford *diligence* is struggling with the torrent. Its passengers are marooned on the bank like shipwrecked sailors, along with the prouder passengers of a grander car. The lady of this car wears a "*chapeau de madame*" with a feather stuck through it like a "*tête madras à deux bouts.*" We all become friends, as shipwrecked people do. We are many weary miles from home. All anxiously watch the struggles of the *poste diligence.* It plunges this way and that like a great beast beset by a pack of wolves, shakes them off and rises in a triumphant leap on the farther bank. The passengers cheer. The road-menders, powerful negroes, carry them across pick-a-back, the women ludicrously timid of wetting their toes when at every step they are threatened with a ducking.

Our chauffeur takes off his shoes and socks, puts them beside him on the seat of the automobile, musters up courage and braves the passage. We are ferried across on strong backs. These willing men, too, have become our friends and can hardly be persuaded to accept pay. Our chauffeur puts on his shoes, but not his socks. Our chance

companions in peril wave at us gaily as we go chugging up the hill.

Nothing more than a slight delay, but in our hearts we and the diligence passengers and the road-menders feel that we have taken part in a struggle of epic proportions. We all wonder just how little more force would have sent one of the men and his human burden tossing down the flood.

At La Trinité, the rock of La Caravelle is like a white sail in the distance. As we turn inland from the beach, we stop a moment to look out across the bay toward the long peninsula and wonder whether it did not look the same to young Pierre Dubuc. A woman standing at the little bridge offers us some hot *chadrons* (sea-urchins). They look as unappetizing as fried brown pin-cushions. A friendly word in refusal brings the pleasant response, "*Madame sait bien refuser gracieusement*" and we do buy some of the queer looking objects.

We cross a valley of cane-fields, then climb lava ridges and follow along old crater edges overlooking the bay of Robert, the yellow sands bright through the shallow waters, then down to the little village of Robert and on beyond to the promontory jutting into the bay, known as La Pointe Royale. Here was the plantation on which was born Aimée Dubuc de Rivery. It is now a lonely, forgotten place.

We return to the plantation of a friend, just such a plantation as that of Aimée's father might have been. A wide view of the sea, the distant beat of the surf, the simple house with long verandas, detached kitchen and servants' quarters, a peaceful house where nothing happens—and where little has ever happened; good food to eat, good wine to drink,—food and wine are about all money buys here—a pleasant breeze, a perfect temperature unless you go about in the sun. But there is no incentive to do that. Everyone seems peaceful and contented. Our friends are charming French people with an added graciousness that seems typical of Martinique. The young daughters of the house have the sort of charm and delicate grace that Aimée and Josephine must have had.

At their age Aimée and Josephine, living in the same air of eternal *dolce far niente*, probably thought nothing ever happened at home. These young girls, too, are preparing for a journey to France, all eagerness for the adventure. Despite their apparent lack of energy, they are sparkling with intelligent curiosity at the thought of their journey.

Their *da*, the devoted old negro nurse, hovers about them with protecting solicitude. She doesn't like the thought of their going across the sea without her, even with their own mother.

Gisèle, the youngest of the girls, is bewitching as a pixie. Her little gossip of the plantation and its people is fascinating. She finds an endless delight in the painting. With three brush strokes of red, white and blue, Madame draws a little French flag on her palette. Gisèle hails it with joy. Madame asks her if she knows the American flag.

"No, what does it look like?" Gisèle asks.

Madame sketches the stars and stripes on her palette.

"Oh, yes," clapping her hands, "I saw that in the parade in Fort-de-France on Armistice Day."

"Ah, Madame," she continues, "you should have seen it. It was sunset. The golden lights striking the colors of the flag, and the costumes—"

With a vivid flash of pantomime, she seems to evoke again unforgettably the joyous parade surging down the street, the flags of the Allies blowing in the sunlight.

"Never, Madame, was anything in the world so beautiful."

While the painter is at work under the big breadfruit tree near the sugar mill, some of the negroes hover about to watch the painting. They can understand the interest in the gayer clothes and the turbans, but when it comes to painting the old hat of one of the women, they can't understand why. One says to another: "*Pourquoi veut-elle dessiner ce*

vieux chapeau-là?" The other repeats it to the next one, "*Ce vieux chapeau-là?*" unanswered, and another "*Ce vieux chapeau-là,*" and so it goes through the questioning group like a roundelay, the chanting in French of "Why does she want to paint that old hat?" In a moment it seems like the refrain of a song.

For all we know, there may be now a song in Martinique still asking, "Why does she want to paint that old hat there?"

The advent of the first automobile in St. Pierre was celebrated in a song still popular. Why not the first painter of old hats?

A little distance away, in a one-room shack some of the negroes are dancing, a drum is rolling, an accordion, whining, and a *cha-cha,* rattling in wild melody. The *cha-cha* is only a big joint of bamboo, with a few dry peas to rattle inside. The young negro who swings it wears a *Croix-de-Guerre* and *Médaille Militaire.* A violin player could not take his music more seriously than he the crashing of the *cha-cha.* In the free syncopation of the air they are playing, there is rhythm, color, suggesting that of the costumes.

In the motley group crowding at the doorway a rough negro youth entreats a little ragamuffin to move out of his way, calling him "*mon petit bonhomme.*" Our first impression of Martinique was

of longshoremen shouting to one another "*mon chè*" (my dear).

The life of the negroes on the plantations in Martinique is reflected in their proverbs. They are the naïve expression of a simple mind, close to nature. The proverbs are part and parcel of every-day conversation. They have a piquancy of phrase analogous to the tang of the music and the vividness of the costume.

Not only do they lose much of their spice and savor in translation, the printed word itself is a crude approximation. The Creole patois is a spoken language, and even to a native is hardly comprehensible in printing. It is a dialect French full of bizarre phrases and images. The mimicry of the negro, his gestures, poses, interjections, exclamations are as much a part of the language as the words themselves.

The grammar is an interesting short-cut of the French. Verbs are always employed in the infinitive. Tense is expressed by prefixes. For example, for the verb *venir*, the present is "*ka vini*," the past, "*té ka vini*," the future, "*ké vini*," the pluperfect "*té vini*," the conditional present, "*sé vini*." This is the complete conjugation. The circle is small, but ample for the needs of the negro.

His grammar is practically complete with "*moin*" (I), "*ou*" (thou), "*li*" (he, she, it),

"*nous*" (we), "*zautt*" (you, derived from *vous autres*), "*yo*" (they). The pronouns are used without change in the possessive and accusative.

Some of the proverbs spring clearly from the mind of the slave, they speak of class distinction, resentment, poverty, fear, resignation, despair. Others, of bad luck, rascality, superstition. Some are merely vivid phrases and idioms. Most of them express in natural mnemonics the homely philosophy of every-day plantation life. They strike some of the universal chords of human nature. A few will serve to give the quality of this folk-lore.

Sèpent dit li pas rhaï moune là qui cué li, c'est ça qui dit: Mi! sèpent!

The serpent says that he doesn't hate the man who killed him, but the man who said: "Look out! A serpent!"

Li connaitt mangé farine, pas connaitt planté manioc.

He knows how to eat the flour but not how to plant manioc.

Vié tison prend fè pli vite passé bois sec.

A charred stick catches fire quicker than dry wood.

Manqué pice, prend pinaise.
If you can't catch a flea, catch a bedbug.

Nègue légé pas tini sommeil.
A lively negro does not get sleepy.

Toutt bef tini laqué pou chasser mouches.
Every ox has a tail to chase flies.

Chaque bef connaitt piquett yo.
Every ox knows his own picket.

Macaque pas janmin trouvè yche yo laid.
The monkey never finds his child ugly.

Bon pié sauvé mauvé cò.
A good foot saves a cowardly body.

Jalousi cé frè socié.
Jealousy is the brother of the sorcerer.

Trop pressé pas ka fè jou ouvé.
Too great hurry does not make the day to break.

Caïe bagasse ka di con sa: jódi pas hiè.
The bagasse shed says to itself, "To-day is not yesterday."

Bagasse is refuse cane-fibre dried to be used for fuel. When a slave wished to injure his master,

he set fire to the bagasse shed and on the morrow only ruins remained.

Jadin loin—gombo gaté.
Garden distant—gumbo spoiled.
Out of sight, out of mind. Gumbo (okra) is a vegetable which must be picked when it is just ripe.

Femme aimé cancan passé mouche-à-miel aimé sirop.
Women love scandal more than bees love syrup.

Cé la pac bas, bef ka sauté.
Where the fence is low, the ox jumps over.

Paóle en bouche pas chagé.
Words in the mouth are not heavy. Talk is cheap.

Foumi fou pas fou—cé pressé yo pressé.
Crazy ants are not so crazy. They are in a hurry because they are in a hurry.

Foc pas attend assou canari bel mè ou.
Don't wait for your mother-in-law's stew-pot.

Cabritt qui pas malin pas gras.
The goat who is not rascally is not fat.

Foc pas ou pè zié pou mangé tête bef.

If you would eat the ox's head you must not fear the eyes.

The big eyes of the ox have a terror for the negro.

Douvan poule ravett pas tini raison.

Before the hen the beetle is in the wrong.

Chaque bett-à-fè clairé pou lame yo.

Every firefly gives light for his own self.

Volè pas aimé oué camarade yo pòté sac.

The thief does not like to see his partner carry the sack.

Lanmisè fè macaque mangé piment.

Want makes the monkey eat red pepper.

Chien tini quatt patte, yo pas fouti prend quatt chimin.

A dog has four legs but he can't take four roads.

Ravett pas assez fou pou allé bó lapote poulailler.

The beetle is not fool enough to go to the hen-house door.

Dent pas khè.

Teeth are not the heart.

A smile doesn't always mean a light heart.

Ça qui dans fale ou cé ta ou, ça qui en bec ou pas ta ou.

What is in your craw is yours, what is in your beak is not yours.

Rhaï chien, ba yo zo yo.

Hate the dog, but give him his bone.

The dog is always the enemy of the negro in these proverbs.

Chien pa ka fè chatt.

A dog will not bring forth a cat.

Macaque save que bois li monté, li pas monté zourange.

The monkey knows which tree to climb, he will not try to climb the thorny orange tree.

A jounou pas ayen, ce priédiè qui maîte.

Kneeling is nothing, saying prayers is hard.

The negro slaves found it easy to learn the postures of religion, but hard to remember the words of the prayers.

Cé soulié qui save si chaussett tini trous.

It is the shoe that knows if the sock has holes.

Couri pas tini saison.

Running has no season.

Ta qui pas ni moussache en soleil pas ka veillé si la pli ké tombé.

He who has no manioc flour drying in the sun does not watch to see if it is going to rain.

Acoma tombé toutt mounn dit c'est bois pourri.

The acoma, one of the great trees of the Antilles, standing, is admired,—blown down by the hurricane, passers-by say, "It is rotten wood."

Ziè béké brilé ziè nègue.

The eyes of the white man burn (overpower) the eyes of the negro.

Tòti sé volé si li té tini plimm.

The tortoise would fly if it had wings.

Si la savane té ka palé nous sé connaitt tròpp de sigret.

If the savane were to speak we should know too many secrets.

Bon Diè baille nouèsett pou ça qui pas ni dent.

The good Lord gives nuts to those who have no teeth.

Magrè sèpent ni ti ziè li ka vouè clè bien.

Although the serpent has little eyes he sees very clearly.

Ti moune connaitt couri yo pas connaitt serré.
Children know how to run but they do not know how to hide.

Quand milatt tini yon viè chouval yo dit négress pas manman yo.
When a mulatto has an old horse he says a negress was not his mother.

Miè vaut yon balaou jodi là qu'taza dimain.
Better a *balaou* today than a *tazard* tomorrow.
The *tazard* is a fish more highly prized than the *balaou.*

Couri déyè chien pou trappé zo.
Run behind the dogs to pick up bones.

Razié tini zoreille.
Bushes have ears.
The negroes hold secret meetings in the bushes.

Chaque moune save ça qui ka bouilli dans canari yo.
Every one knows what is boiling in his own pot.

Zouéseau blié—zattrape pas ka blié.
The birds forget—the traps never forget.

Toutt zattrape bon pou tranglé chien.
Any trap is good enough to strangle a dog.

Bef pas janmin dit pou savane: "Grand mèci."
The ox never says to his pasture, "Thank you."

Chaque chien ka niché guiole yo en gout yo.
Every dog licks his chops to his own taste.

These are among the proverbs which have a native flavor. Many of the others obviously bear a French imprint.

Entering into the life of the plantation, we seem even more in the mood of the past than in the life of the town. That old sugar mill there on the way up the hillside may have been built by Père Labat. We climb on up to the crest of the morne, there a little precipice looks out toward the sea and a wide sky of clouds. From somewhere in the forest behind us, though seemingly out of the air from nowhere, there comes a clear piping, recalling the melody of a Greek goatherd on Taygetos, a plaintive, endless bit of a tune, but unutterably beautiful. We listen for a long time, but dare not try to find whence it comes. It seems too delicate a thing to seek, a spirit of impalpable beauty. Sunlight and green things growing in marvelous, dream-like beauty—but this little melody expresses a sadness and lonesomeness beyond words.

Gazing out across the lonely sea, day-dreaming, we feel in the lazy luxuriousness of the trade-wind

—the wind of even "tread"—the same gentle caress that Françoise, Aimée, Josephine, Hortense remembered all their lives.

Day-dreaming long hours away, they watched, as we watch, the play of the wind among the great cloud ranges of summer, Himalayas of the air hovering like ghosts over the drowned Andes of the sea.

The piled cumulus clouds of the hurricane season, high above the wide sea-ways, travel the far-leading level roads of air in unending procession. Clouds of the tropic seas, magnificent in imaginatively sculptured form, dramatic in colossal movement, play in endless pictures of elemental life across the heavens; rose and gold at dawn; infinitely white under the blaze of the noon-day sun; matching the pale gold of the afternoon moon; melting in lavender, orange and red at sunset; sleeping in snowbanks in the moonlight; black curtains across the vault of stars.

Mountain tops built up higher than Everest and tossed again to the invisible plain upon which they rest. Volcanoes bursting in plumes of Vesuvius-like steam higher than Krakatoa. Cloud-piles that in the North portend a shrieking thunder-storm, here only the silent explosion of gigantic Zeppelins. A flaming flamingo perched on a violet glacier becomes a saffron bear on a mauve

camel. The bear slowly loses his head in air and is transformed into a dancing monkey and then a turkey gobbler with a red sector of a rainbow for his wattle.

Gods of mythology, centaurs and winged victories, seraphim, cherubim, griffins and golden galleons, dromedaries and dinotheria, Arabs and elephants with swaying howdahs, Pierrot and Punchinello, sea-lions and swans, druids and dragons, veiled dancers and monstrous megatheriums, seals and penguins, glitter of silver armor and plumes of charging knights, white peacocks and unicorns, goblins and wraiths, all in grotesque masque and ghostly carnival, range themselves on the vast plain above us in stately caravan.

Black tempest veils laced with lightning, thrown down from mountain masses over-swollen to heaven; chariots of storm racing across black bridges to a Matterhorn goal; gargantuan Boboli marbles atop the Cyclopean arena. Then of a sudden, precipices covered with swinging cataracts of rain, shot across with shafts of light and hung with broken arcs of doubled rainbows. Gradually the mass falls into a Delectable Mountain of snow, shining white and cold under the tropical sun. Endlessly, the free spirit of the wind molds the pageant of the clouds, unchanging, ever-changing.

THE VEILED EMPRESS

IV

THE VEILED EMPRESS

"Think of what you ought to do, so that you may not have to reproach yourself for what you ought to have done."—Mahmoud the Great.

1

The birth-place of the French Sultana, the mother of the ablest and most energetic Sultan of modern Turkey, was fittingly called La Pointe Royale. The little promontory, still known by that name, jutting into the quiet Harbor of Robert, drowses to-day in the sun, under the soothing spell of the steady trade-wind, just as it drowsed under that soft caress of perfect comfort, lulling peace, luxurious tropical contentment, when young Pierre Dubucq first set foot upon it and when Aimée Dubuc de Rivery played there as a child.

From Pierre Dubucq came the fighting blood of the great Mahmoud. Fifteen years the French had been fighting, when Pierre, a lad of fourteen, joined the "Regiment of the Grand Master," Cardinal Richelieu's own regiment. After four years of the Thirty Years' War, the young veteran returned home to Normandy. His family was

among the best of the Norman nobility. For some reason not known, or for no reason at all (those were the days of d'Artagnan), he fought a duel with a gentleman of quality, the Chevalier de Piancourt. Whoever was in the right, the hot-blooded lad was the better swordsman. He left his adversary dead and then, reflecting on trouble to come from the Piancourts, fled to Dieppe.

By what seemed good fortune, he found a ship about to sail for the West Indies with a company of adventurous young men of Normandy. At once he cast his lot with them. Arrived at St. Kitts, the Governor of the French Colony there, d'Esnambuc, was not long in recognizing the valor of young Dubucq and sent him,—it was still 1637,—to Martinique with his nephew, du Parquet, the Governor of the new colony on that island.

Pierre Dubucq, a "man of iron, with heart of gold," was a fit lieutenant for the brave young du Parquet, "King of the Tropics." Among the least fit of the colonists at this time was Constant d'Aubigné, worthless son of a worthy father. Françoise d'Aubigné, the child born in prison of the jailor's daughter and this good-for-nothing scape-grace, afterward became Madame de Maintenon and wife of Louis XIV. "Aubignette," as she was called, spent several years—ten according to some writers—of her childhood here in direst

poverty. The neighbors' children sneered at her rags. The wretchedness and humiliation of her life in Martinique was as great in one extreme as her later power and grandeur in the other.

The young Sieur Dubucq fought the savages, built the first plantation and the first sugar mill at La Trinité in the wilder eastern part of the island, and was the first to start from the native trees the cultivation of cocoa on the island. It was not a great while after he started the making of chocolate that this announcement was published in the *Public Advertiser* (London) of June 16, 1657: "In Bishopsgate Street, in Queens Head Alley, at a Frenchman's house, is an excellent West India drink, called chocolate, to be sold, where you may have it ready at any time, and also unmade at reasonable rates."

In addition to the successful cultivation of his plantation, he took part in all the fighting going on. At St. Kitts, Antigua, Nevis, Montserrat, Tobago, St. Eustatius, Curaçoa, he distinguished himself and received many wounds. As late as 1691 he was fighting the English at Guadeloupe and in 1692 at Martinique. His many claims for distinction are recited in the letters of nobility (now in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*) granted to him in 1701.

His sons and their sons were also gallant men whose brave clothes became their high spirits and

flashing swords. They and their descendants remained about La Trinité and the neighboring town of Robert.

2

One of his descendants, François Henry Dubuc de Rivery, married Marie Victoire Menant, also of an excellent French family. Their daughter, Marie Marthe Aimée Dubuc de Rivery, was born at their sugar-plantation, "La Pointe Royale," in the parish of Sainte Rose, Harbor of Robert. The date is not certain; the best information gives only the year 1763. Her father died that year and her mother died before she was six years old. Aimée, as she was usually known, lived then with her guardian, M. Dubuc de Sainte Preuve, of La Trinité, and with others of her numerous relatives in Martinique.

In Pierre's letters of nobility the family name is spelled Dubucq. Dubuq appears in various original records, but Dubuc is the form in general use.

Notwithstanding the fact that Aimée was an orphan, her early life was not very different from the pleasant and indolent life of the other planters' children of that time, and of to-day for that matter. She had the devoted service of a negro nurse, her

da. There was little to do. The days went on and on slowly, peacefully, uneventfully.

3

Among the relatives—almost all the better families of Martinique are related—whom Aimée visited after her mother's death, was the Tascher de la Pagerie family at Trois Ilets about seventeen miles from Pointe Royale. A curious story is told of one of these visits, a story of a prophecy of the strange fate in store for the two cousins, Aimée and Josephine, by an old negro fortune-teller, Euphémie David, who lived near Trois Ilets. The two girls were then both about thirteen years old.

The first version associating Aimée with this episode occurs in that discredited hodge-podge of a book, *Mémoires historiques et secrets de l'Impératrice Joséphine* by the famous soothsayer of Paris, Mademoiselle Le Normand, published in 1820, well after the facts said to have been prophesied. Sir Walter Scott, however, asserted that the story of the prophecy so far as it concerned Josephine, was related to a friend of his at the time of Bonaparte's Italian campaign, long before the fulfilment of the prediction.

Be that as it may, the story was told by Josephine to a number of people. Different versions occur in various memoirs and histories derived

originally from Josephine and possibly from local tradition in Martinique. That of Le Normand was probably derived in substance from Josephine, although Le Normand has embroidered it with her own skill in the soothsayer's art.

Le Normand tells in great detail the story of the visit to the fortune-teller, Euphémie David, by Josephine, Aimée, and another young girl, not clearly identified (possibly the one who afterwards became Madame de Peyronnet). Euphémie predicts in high-flown language the subsequent careers of Aimée and of Josephine.

To Aimée she is made to say:

> Your family will soon send you to Europe to perfect your education there. Your ship will be taken by Algerian Corsairs. You will be made a captive and almost immediately conducted into a Seraglio. There you will have a son. This son will reign gloriously, but the steps of the throne which he will occupy will have been reddened with the blood of one of his immediate predecessors. As for you, you will never enjoy the public honors of the court, but you will occupy a vast and magnificent palace where you will have command. At the very moment when you believe that you are the happiest of women, your happiness will vanish like a dream, and a lingering malady will take you to your tomb.

And to Josephine:

You will be married to a blond man, intended first for another of your family. She, in whose place you will go, is not to live long. A young man whom you love will never cease to think of you; but you will never marry him. Even your efforts to save his life will be useless. His end must be unhappy.

Your star promises you two marriages. The first of your husbands will be a native of Martinique, but he will live in Europe and will wear a sword. He will have some moments of happiness. An unfortunate lawsuit will separate you and, following the great troubles which will come to the kingdom of France, he will perish in a tragic manner and will leave you a widow with two young children.

Your second husband will be very dark, of European origin, with unpromising future. Nevertheless, he will become celebrated, and will fill the world with his glory. A great number of nations will submit to his power. You will become then a great lady and will possess a supreme dignity; but many ungrateful people will forget your benefactions. After having astonished the world, you will die unhappy. The country where that which I predict will take place is a part of Celtic Gaul. More than once, in the midst of your prosperity, you will regret the sweet and peaceful life which you led in the colony.

The chief interest of Le Normand's account is in a footnote giving with various errors something of the story of Aimée's life.

Whether Josephine made up the story of the fortune-teller's prediction out of whole cloth to give a supernatural sanction to her own high destiny, whether she was the victim of superstitious credulity, supplementing with willing imagination a hazy recollection of the usual Delphic tale of good fortune and ill fortune to come, or whether this story is proof that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy," is a riddle which each will answer according to his own mind.

At any rate Mademoiselle Le Normand's acquaintance with Josephine was intimate and her prestige at that time extremely great. Robespierre, Marat, Talleyrand, Napoleon, Alexander consulted her. In an age which believed neither in God nor devil, many substituted for the religion they had discarded, a faith in this charlatan as a priestess of the mysteries of chiromancy and astrology. That she had no occult means of divining truth is demonstrated by the fact that her own book is a tissue of falsehoods.

There is an interesting suggestion of the influence of the alleged prediction upon Josephine in a book published in 1814, shortly after her death, by a writer who signs himself M. de F. . . . He says that even when she shared in the glory of Napoleon at its highest point, when his pride was equalled

only by the adulation which fed it, Josephine remembered with humility the prophecy that before she died she would lose her great place beside him.

4

The nearest neighbors and the most intimate friends of the Tascher de la Pagerie family at Trois Ilets were the Marlet family. How intimate their friendship was is shown in a letter written by Josephine when she was in the midst of her troubles with her husband, Alexandre de Beauharnais. Josephine writes to M. Marlet:

I am very sorry, Monsieur, to contradict you. I assure you that it is not at all to annoy you that I take up my pen to write you; the gratitude by which I am so greatly moved by the proofs of friendship which you have shown me during your sojourn in France and which you continue to show me, ought to be a sure guarantee to you of the pleasure I have in receiving news of you, in inquiring about your family and ought to convince you of the very sincere affection that I have avowed for you.

I hope in the future to have no more of the same reasons which have prevented me from answering you. My aunt has been very ill. They have applied blisters to her which have done all that is possible for her. Her health is good at the present moment. She would be

still better if I should receive satisfactory news from my papa and mama.

You are not able to imagine, Monsieur, all that I have to try my feelings; if I could only open my heart to you, you would see how much it suffers; besides you know already my situation is not at all changed; it must be.

The health of my sister grieves me greatly; if the air of France were favorable to her, mama might profit by the opportunity of sending her with my uncle. We have here a very skillful doctor who, perhaps, might cure her.

I must be very sure of your indulgence, Monsieur, to talk over all my troubles with you. I hope that you may never have any. If by misfortune you should find yourself in this condition, do me the justice of being persuaded that I will indeed share them with you. I pray you to be convinced of it as well as of the sentiments which you know so well how to inspire, and with which I have the honor to be, Monsieur,

Your very humble and very obedient servant

LAPAGERIE DE BEAUHARNAIS

Fontainebleau, January 27, 1787.

PS. May I ask you, Monsieur, to remember me to Mme. Marlet?

I have forgotten to send word to my papa that he would greatly please my aunt by sending her some coffee from the Ances-d'Arlets. She uses a great deal of coffee in her house and my papa is anxious to have

good coffee. I would be much obliged, Monsieur, if you would speak to him about it.

The aunt referred to was Madame Renaudin, mistress and later wife of François de Beauharnais, Josephine's father-in-law. He was the "papa" who liked good coffee. The other "papa" was Josephine's own father. The uncle was the Baron de Tascher. The Anse d'Arlet is a famous place for growing coffee, not far from Trois Ilets.

Josephine's friendship with the Marlets was renewed on her return to Martinique with Hortense, then five years old, in July, 1788. When Josephine and Hortense were waiting in Havre for a ship they stayed with a Monsieur and Madame Dubuc. This Monsieur Dubuc was an uncle of Aimée's. Josephine and Hortense remained at Trois Ilets until September, 1790.

Another fact bearing on the intimacy between the Marlet, the Dubuc de Rivery and the Tascher de la Pagerie families is the marriage at Robert on January 15th, 1806, of Charles Henry Marc Guillaume Marlet, a son of Louis Guillaume Marlet, to whom Josephine wrote the letter quoted above, and Aimée's niece, Marie Alexandrine Louise Victoire Dubuc de Rivery. The niece eventually inherited the family property on Pointe Royale. The plantation was long known as the

"Habitation Marlet." At the christening of this niece, Aimée was godmother. At the time of the christening, July 17th, 1780, Aimée was at Nantes, and was represented by her sister, Marie Anne Victoire Dubuc de Rivery.

5

One of the facts that Le Normand does give correctly is that Aimée was sent to France probably about 1776 to complete her education. In sending her to the Convent of the Dames de la Visitation at Nantes, where many of the young ladies of noble families of Nantes and Brittany were then sent to school, Aimée's guardian probably had in mind the ancient dignity of the family as well as the promise of her own unusual intelligence and her desire for something more than Martinique could offer.

Nantes was a natural choice for a place to send Aimée. There had long been frequent sailings between Nantes and Martinique. Many of the sons of rich colonial families went there in the eighteenth century and some of the families in Nantes were related to those in Martinique.

At the convent there, Aimée is said to have passed eight peaceful years. In the letters to her guardian, her teachers praised her ability as a

student and her great personal charm. The only known picture of her, an old engraving, shows an aristocratic Norman face of delicate flower-like loveliness and in her wistful young eyes the light of a brave spirit. This engraving was made from a miniature said to have been painted shortly before she sailed for France. There was a miniature painter named Fourbiseur in St. Pierre at that time.

6

Aimée remained longer in Nantes than was originally planned on account of the war between France and England following the alliance of France with the American Colonies in 1778. The treaty of peace concluding this war was not made until September 3rd, 1783. It was 1784 before Aimée, then nearly twenty-one, started on her return voyage to Martinique accompanied by her maid, an old negress who had come from Martinique with her.

Their ship, a small vessel bound from Nantes to Martinique, out in the Bay of Biscay racked by the buffets of a smashing cross-sea gale, sprang a leak, her seams began to open, and she was rapidly sinking when at dusk, despair changed to hope with the appearance of a larger Spanish ship. With difficulty all were rescued before their vessel

foundered. The Spanish vessel was bound for Majorca, the largest of the Balearic Islands.

When they were in sight of their destination, the picturesque city of Palma di Majorca, they were overhauled and attacked by Algerian corsairs. It is easy to imagine the picture of the ruthless Barbary corsairs, delighting in their fierce business of despoiling the Spaniards; the anxiety of Aimée's old nurse, who had no fear for herself; the spirit and charm of the young girl that marked her out to the old pirate chieftain,—skilled in judging such prizes—as no common slave but one worthy of favor in the eyes of his master, the great Dey of Algiers himself; a scene of alarm and despair on the part of the victims so near to safety, in unreal contrast to the peacefulness of the Mediterranean at its bluest and loveliest just off the shores of Majorca. These pirates, who were engaged in their customary business of ravaging the Spanish coasts, made short work of the little defense the Spaniards could make and took the vessel and all on board to Algiers.

Aimée undoubtedly had the very human feeling of grievance at tragedy. One expects that sort of thing to happen to some one else. Her alert eyes, however, suggest that she may not have been insensible to the adventure of it. The old corsair probably saw in her something of the nobility of

spirit,—the flashing sword of Pierre Dubucq,—as well as beauty alone to determine him to take her to old Baba Mohammed ben Osman, the Dey of Algiers, himself.

As she passed along the streets of Algiers to the Jenina the blaze and heat of the sun, the colors and the palms of the tropics seen again after those long years, awakened dormant memories of Martinique.

Old Baba Mohammed ben Osman, standing in the great court of the Jenina, looked a fit successor to the terrible Horuk Barbarossa. Baba Mohammed, although seventy-four, was at the height of his power, undisputed master of the Barbary corsairs, victor over all his enemies, successfully waging war with all who wished to fight him, and, except France, all the civilized states of the world were then at war with him.

He had defeated expedition after expedition against him and forced his enemies to pay tribute. That very year he beat three hundred great Spanish men-of-war with his sixty-seven little vessels.

Although his recognition of the sovereignty of the Sultan of Turkey was merely nominal, the Dey was under recent and great obligations to the Porte for supplies of sorely needed munitions of war. Old Baba Mohammed when he saw Aimée reflected that here was a rare jewel of beauty, a fitting

gift to send to the great Sultan. Among his many thousands of slaves no other was so worthy of the honor of a place in the Harem of the Sultan. No greater gift of tribute could he make to his sovereign than this fair-haired slave.

Accordingly a vessel was fitted out in state and Aimée sent to Constantinople in the magnificence befitting a future favorite of the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, the Caliph of the Faithful, the Overlord of the Barbary State.

Then came the long voyage, past the mountains of Sicily, reminding her of the faint blue outlines of Vauclain behind Robert, past the isolated cone of Pantelleria, rising sheer out of the sea,—it seemed like a peak of Carbet,—on, past the mountain shores of Greece and the Ægean Islands, awakening recollections of a chapter of Homer and a classroom in the convent in Nantes. Then the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora, Constantinople,—Stamboul, the beautiful.

7

With its golden towers, its glorious pile of mosques and minarets, with crescents bright in the sun, its painted houses, its kiosks, palaces and gardens, its great bazaars, Constantinople, seated on the shore of the Bosphorus at the junction point

of the great roads of commerce, could still claim to be supreme among imperial capitals.

With all the beauty of the scene, the forbidding walls and the black cypresses of the Seraglio chilled Aimée's heart with a foreboding of more than prison gates. The Seraglio, the palace of the Sultan, was a city in itself,—as large as the Faubourg St. Germain,—capable of holding twenty thousand people. As the vessel rounded the Seraglio Point and turned in toward the Golden Horn, they pointed out to Aimée among the domes, towers, and golden cupolas the inner group of palaces, the Harem.

It all seemed as unreal as a dream and when they landed she felt as if she were walking in a dream, this veiled person in floating draperies, tinselled red slippers, as unreal as the rest. Her own life seemed at an end, another beginning. When they reached the High Gate, with a shock of repulsion and terror like a nightmare, she saw there impaled men's heads so recently severed that steaming blood still ran from them.

Had she been a gift from one less than the renowned and redoubtable Dey of Algiers, she might have played no greater part in the Seraglio than the usual lot of a slave to one of the favorites. A gift from Baba Mohammed, she was received by the chief of the eunuchs himself.

That dignitary found not merely a slave of unusual beauty, but one of intelligence and knowledge far beyond the other women of the harem, excepting only Selim's mother, to whose interest he was devoted. He realized that Aimée, raised to power as a favorite of the Sultan, might become an important ally in the deadly struggle then going on between the mother of Selim,—nephew of the Sultan and, as the eldest of the Ottoman line after the Sultan, heir to the throne,—and the mother of Mustapha, son of the Sultan and next to Selim in succession.

When the chief of the eunuchs informed her that she might have the honor of being presented to Sultan Abdul Hamid I, Aimée showed such horror and unmistakable determination to avoid the fate she saw awaiting her that he did not know what to do, and went to seek counsel of Selim's mother.

Selim's mother was the daughter of a Christian priest of the ancient Kingdom of Georgia. When a child this Georgian slave had been given to Mustapha III. She was wonderfully intelligent even as a child and developed into a woman of great ability. She remained a Christian all her life. She became in time the favorite of Mustapha III, the father of Selim. It was, however, chiefly to her own great determination and ability that she owed the power she held for so long. She needed

all of those qualities to preserve the life of her son, Selim. He stood between Mustapha, the son of Abdul Hamid, and the throne; between Mustapha's mother and the power of the Valideh Sultan, mother of the Sultan, crown of the Veiled Heads, the greatest dignity and power attainable by a woman in the Ottoman Empire. Already Mustapha's mother had once succeeded in having poison administered to Selim. Through the instant action of an attendant skilled in toxicology, whom Selim's mother kept at his side, his life was saved, though his health remained enfeebled.

At the time of Aimée's arrival, Mustapha's mother, as the most important of the favorites and mother of Abdul Hamid's only surviving son, was first in the Seraglio, Abdul Hamid's mother being no longer living.

No one knew better than Selim's mother the danger this meant to her son. From the chief eunuch's account of Aimée, she could readily see that here was a possibility for sorely needed help not to be overlooked. She sent for Aimée. It did not take her long to determine that Aimée's help was worth playing for.

Selim's mother was clever enough to play her cards well, most of all, in a game in which her son's life and throne were at stake. These were her cards:

By no possibility could Aimée ever leave the Harem. The Sultan was kindly and good, one in whose eyes Aimée would find great favor, and who would appreciate her charm and intelligence. Since she must remain in the Seraglio for life, she might as well be first there, a real Queen of a greater domain than she imagined. Mustapha's mother, now holding such baleful power, held it more from the fact that no one had come to supplant her rather than from any affection on the part of Abdul Hamid. In the Harem was played a great and fascinating part in the game of politics and statecraft, a game at which Aimée with her education and knowledge of the Western world could become a master player. She might be of great influence for good over the entire Empire. Her son would rule as the mighty Sultan and Aimée, as Mother of the Sultan, would enjoy the greatest power of all. She could also remain faithful to her own Christian religion, even as the mother of Selim had never forsaken her faith. The mothers of all of the Sultans had been Christian slaves, Greek, Armenian, Georgian, Italian, though only one or two had remained Christian.

Then the appeal of a mother's heart: the mother of the lovable, gentle Selim, a youth only a few years older than Aimée, needed Aimée's help in the constant, bitter, unseen battle she was then fighting

with all her skill and energy, for the life of her son, for his throne, against the wicked mother of Mustapha, himself unworthy and cruel, a fight not only for Selim, but for the future welfare of the nation. Selim's mother sought help for her son, even as Aimée's mother might ask the help now of Selim's mother for her daughter in all the troubles that might come, and not in vain.

Point by point, Selim's mother felt her way, tested Aimée's mettle, and found a kindred spirit. Aimée realized the truth of all these things, the need that she, her own mother a distant memory of early childhood, had for the friendship of Selim's mother, and understood the rest unsaid. They formed an alliance, offensive and defensive, which lasted for their lives.

8

Aimée found that Abdul Hamid was in truth not like old Baba Mohammed, before whose cruel eyes she had quailed, but was a gentle patriarch, a scholar and a philosopher.

She too found quickly enough that the mother of Mustapha was awake to the new danger to her power; that without the advice and help of Selim's mother this contest would be hopeless, and that the battle was none the less real because hidden.

Aimée's son, Mahmoud, was born on July 20th, 1785. He was next in succession to the throne after Selim and Mustapha, a perilous honor. Abdul Hamid I died April 7th, 1789, and Selim III then ascended the throne. Selim was a gentle, well-intentioned weakling, never much more than a figure-head for the power of his mother.

The story of intrigue and politics in the imperial harem is the most secret history of the world. It was probably never of greater importance than during the years when Aimée was one of the three women who played the greatest part in making this history.

Ruffin, who knew more of this secret history than any man not a Turk, and more than all but very few of the Turks, said "Whoever knows the tactics of affairs (politics) in Turkey, will agree that they are all elaborated in the first place in the harems. Woman may alone penetrate there, and to their gentle and secret influence almost every diplomat owes his successes."

Lamartine was one among many writers of Turkish history who has observed that political genius was sometimes greatly developed with "the favorite Sultanas, who were admitted to all the confidences of government, and took part in all the intrigues of Court. Long and great reigns have been founded and governed by some one of these

beautiful slaves, perpetuating in the palace the ascendency of their charms by the ascendency of their genius. Favorites, they enslaved; mothers, they planned in secret and prepared for the reigns of their sons."

Cadalvene and Barrault, writing later said:

> Often upon the hidden movements of a sort of feminine conspiracy depends the destiny of an official personage or of an important decision. It is precisely because the Orient covers them with a veil and silence, that women are of greatest effectiveness in the most delicate negotiations, a subtle influence radiating only in the shadow.

So secret is this influence that it is usually only in results that it can be traced. Events during the period of Aimée's influence in Constantinople are persuasive as to the nature of that influence.

We can sometimes say, here is the effect and here is not only the probable but also the only possible cause. The evidence is circumstantial, but the evidence of facts themselves may be more conclusive than the testimony of witnesses.

To appreciate the meaning of these facts one must understand the part that was then played by the Janissaries in Constantinople. In centuries past they had been the shock troops whose name alone filled Europe with terror and to whose

fanatical valor the Ottoman Sultans were indebted for their greatest victories. They were now a decayed and corrupt Prætorian guard, an infamous force of evil, plunder, anarchy, consistently opposed to any effort toward progress or reform in the wretched disorder of Turkish administration.

The policy of Mustapha's mother was directed toward an alliance with this power, the strongest in the state, though the most sinister. This inevitably drove the mother of Selim and her ally, Aimée, to the necessity of devising means for curbing the arbitrary powers of the Janissaries, and of devising methods of reform to insure a better administration or at any rate a stronger administration in which the Sultan might be ruler in his own capital.

Such a course was as natural for these two women as the other for the mother of Mustapha. The mother of Mahmoud knew what civilized and orderly administration of affairs meant. Selim's mother was not a woman who would remain supine before a force which threatened to make her son a tool of the Janissaries, and to deprive her of the power rightfully hers as Valideh Sultan, mother of the Sultan. These two women of Christian faith in the very heart of a most intolerant system of religion, necessarily led their sons toward the path of tolerance, a path to be trod only with the ut-

most circumspection. Danger was always at the elbow.

Like attracts like. When the more intelligent and tolerant-minded came within Aimée's sphere of influence, they tended to become a part of a liberal group, a small group whose existence was possible only with the secret protection of the all-powerful Valideh Sultan. The Valideh Sultan and the mother of Mahmoud were necessarily committed to a policy of reform. Their enemies were the legion of the bigoted and reactionary, facing them at every turn. Of these enemies, the Janissaries, at their very door, were the most watchful, suspicious, and the most dangerous. Reform meant in the first instance the reduction of the power of the Janissaries.

At that time, their chief lieutenants in this liberal group, the party of reform, were Kutchuk Hussein Pasha and Youssouf Aga Chia Jassi.

Hussein Pasha was a young Georgian, a former slave in the Seraglio, foster-brother and childhood companion of Selim. Hussein was an extraordinary man, one of the ablest and most distinguished in Turkish history. He became general and admiral in Selim's reign. He married Mahmoud's sister, the Sultana Esmé, a remarkable woman, who after Aimée's death was Mahmoud's sole confidant.

Youssouf Aga, a Cretan of humble origin, was Chamberlain of the household of Selim's mother. Nominally he became the Grand Vizier, but in reality was the actual executive head of the government. His power was unquestioned during the life of Selim's mother and ended with her death.

Selim's mother, Hussein and Youssouf were not so much interested in arresting the decadence of Turkey as in adapting to their own ambitious ends the more perfect instrumentalities of power of western civilization. Aimée's more altruistic desire for reform centered naturally about her son. She wished the Empire improved and strengthened not only because it was to be his, but also because she had known the security and happiness of a better organized civilization.

9

Two of the most important policies of the liberal group acting under the influence of Aimée were, first, the creation of a disciplined army after the French system and, second, an actual alliance with France, the greatest power in the civilized world. The project of creating a regular army loyal to the Sultan was carefully planned but could be worked out only with great caution. Toward the second object, they had adopted the unprecedented course,

astonishing for the heir to any throne, but incredibly astonishing for the heir to the Turkish throne, of having Selim, before he became Sultan, still a prisoner in the Prince's Cage in the Seraglio, write a letter directly to Louis XVI, King of France, in person.

This naïve method of direct negotiation was a logical one to Aimée. Choiseul-Gouffier, the French Ambassador at the Porte, readily appreciated the importance of these overtures and arranged for the reception at Versailles of the proposed emissary, Isaac Bey. He arrived at Marseilles on October 18th, 1786, and, going directly to Versailles, delivered Selim's letter to Louis XVI. The letter is said to have been full of oriental eulogy of Louis XVI and vague promises. It was probably not intended to be more than a friendly preliminary toward a better understanding. This method of diplomatic intercourse was a complete puzzle to Vergennes, the minister for foreign affairs. It became the subject of correspondence between Vergennes and Choiseul-Gouffier. Vergennes probably suspected some oriental trick concealed in this apparently simple letter. Not until May 23rd, 1787, did Louis reply to him. His reply was of such formal nature that Selim did not write again.

If only Vergennes could have read between the

lines and seen that the letter came in fact from a young French woman, who, confronted with the most momentous of problems, realized her own lack of knowledge and turned to France for help. Nevertheless, the incident impressed upon the French embassy the good will of Selim, the future sovereign, toward France, although they found it difficult to imagine that Selim himself would have strength enough to be of much influence in his own country even as Sultan.

The importance this correspondence had in Selim's mind is indicated by the fact that, twenty years afterward, he recognized in a note written by Ruffin the handwriting of the man who had written in Turkish the translation of the note of Louis XVI to him so long before. At that time Ruffin was in Paris.

Isaac Bey, who was one of the inner circle of Aimée's Seraglio group although he was not himself of importance, carried with him presents and a message to one of Aimée's friends, the first news of her to reach France.

Through this friend, Aimée's uncle, M. Dubuc (of Havre), learned for the first time that Aimée was living and of her fate. Through Isaac Bey, Aimée learned that her uncle was in France and subsequently communicated with him. By the time Josephine visited M. Dubuc in Havre in

June, 1788, he had not only heard of Aimée through her first communication, but had probably had more direct word himself.

Selim, nominally, but in reality his mother, acting with Aimée, maintained a consistent policy of friendship toward France. Even in 1792 at the time of the French Revolution when all the other crowned heads of Europe were united in armed hatred of France, and fear of her anarchic influence, Selim III manifested only an interest in the welfare of the people of France. His message was not that of an autocratic sovereign shocked by this new menace threatening sacred thrones but was one that came from the heart of a French woman, voicing Christian sympathy for the suffering of the people of France.

Selim's administration, through the power of the group directed by his mother and Aimée, was the beginning of the modernization of Turkey, the beginning of the civilization of Turkey in the modern sense of improved administration.

They took vigorous steps toward the building of a real army. They employed French engineers and artillery officers in the artillery school. By the merest chance, it happened that Napoleon Bonaparte was not at the head of these officers. He applied for permission to go but Napoleon had not polished up the handle of the big front door to

the satisfaction of some card catalogue keeper in the personnel department of the war office. Permission was refused. With one stroke of a pen on September 15th, 1795, an unknown clerk for some unknown reason changed the history of the world. Constantinople always had a fascination for Napoleon. Think of how narrowly Selim's mother missed having Napoleon Bonaparte for chief of artillery! The possible consequences are beyond imagination.

Besides employing these French officers in the artillery school, the group in power had printed in Turkish, translations of French works on military science and mathematics for use in the school, and, boldest of all, had the French language taught there and established a library containing works of the best French writers, including even the Encyclopædia. The school had complete artillery equipment.

In addition to the special artillery instructors, other French officers were employed for instruction in all branches of the service. Cannon-founders and other experts were also brought to Constantiniople.

All of these innovations were looked upon with increasing animosity by the Janissaries. They had no doubt of the purpose behind these changes.

A naval school was established with French

instructors. Ships were constructed by French builders in accordance with plans used in the French navy. The pirates of the Ægean were suppressed. The fortifications were strengthened and garrisoned. A corps of cavalry was organized, armed and drilled.

10

In 1797 a Turkish ambassador, Ali Essaid Effendi, was sent to Paris, the first permanent one to be sent there, and the only one since the visit of an ambassador extraordinary in 1742. The sending of Essaid as ambassador to the Directory was regarded in France as most striking evidence of the friendship of Selim III for the French. Obtaining a recognition from the Sublime Porte, greater than that accorded to the monarchy, added much to the prestige of the Directory.

Essaid's reception in Paris was enthusiastic, a spectacular triumph of almost unheard of furor. He was "King of Paris." The city took on the aspect of an oriental masquerade. Dressmakers never worked so hard before as they did in making "*robes à la turque.*" Milliners could sell only oriental turbans and bonnets. *La citoyenne* Tallien set the fashion. In turbans of this period you can see the *tête calendée* of Martinique. The height

of the fashion lasted four weeks in Paris. The *tête calendée* is still the fashion in Fort-de-France.

Napoleon, flushed with his success in Italy, received Essaid with the greatest show of friendship. At the same time he was already planning his grandiose campaign for the conquest of Turkey beginning with Eygpt. "Constantinople! Never! It is the empire of the world!" he said later at Tilsit, in denying Constantinople to Alexander.

11

Napoleon's attack upon Egypt and Syria was a disheartening blow to the friends of France at Constantinople. He dreamed of himself as Emperor of the Orient, of a triumphal return to Paris by way of Constantinople until the rude awakening of his failure to take St. Jean d'Acre. There, the Georgian, Kutchuk Hussein, with his new troops trained in the French manner, and Phélippeaux, one of Napoleon's former schoolmates at Brienne who was animated by a personal hatred of Napoleon, strangely assorted leaders, each contributed to the French defeat. Napoleon never ceased regretting that failure. At St. Helena he said, "Master of St. Jean d'Acre, I would have taken Constantinople and India and changed the face of the world."

Even during the period of the war between Turkey and France, Selim's ambassador did not actually leave Paris, although his functions were suspended. In October 1801, Essaid Ali negotiated a treaty of peace. Napoleon sent Sebastiani, an able young aide-de-camp, with it to Constantinople and in addition with a letter to be delivered to Selim in person. Though entirely contrary to the etiquette of the Turkish court, the letter was delivered to Selim in person on December 6th, 1801. Sebastiani was received by Selim with the most marked favor. The renewal of his friendship for France was obvious. The particular treaty that Sebastiani brought was not signed, but soon after his return Galib Effendi was sent as ambassador to Paris with a personal letter from Selim to Napoleon. The treaty of peace was signed the 25th of June, 1802.

This treaty re-established all the ancient privileges of the French and granted to France all rights that had been or might be given other nations, and in addition gave especial facilities to French commerce in the Black Sea, a thing Napoleon greatly desired. In exchange, Napoleon announced a guarantee of protection to Selim.

Late in 1802, Napoleon sent Brune as ambassador to Constantinople. There he, too, was given a brilliant reception and was shown most

marked friendship. Brune also reported that Galib Effendi was a staunch friend of France.

12

The danger to Selim and his party from their enemies within the gates, the Janissaries, ever threatening, was greatly increased after the death of Kutchuk Hussein in 1803. It was then that Aimée began to think of possible help from Napoleon. Selim wrote Napoleon a personal letter and Napoleon sent Selim the cross of the Legion of Honor. That this cross should have been placed upon Selim's sacred person by the infidel hand of the French ambassador was one of the things Selim's enemies made much of.

With the death of Selim's mother, the real head of the nation, on October 16th, 1805, the peril to Selim, Aimée and Mahmoud became most imminent. Youssouf fled at once ostensibly on a pilgrimage to Mecca. The mother of Mustapha, her intrigues succeeding in placing some of her partisans in power as Selim's ministers, felt at last the moment had come to strike down Selim and put her son upon the throne. But a firm hand still held a grip upon the reins of power. Aimée still met every move of the mother of Mustapha; still met them but felt defeat coming nearer.

Selim's intentions were good but he was much too weak to be depended on for more than a show of authority. Mahmoud gave promise of great strength of character and courageous spirit, but he was only a boy of twenty and despite Selim's affection for him and kindness toward him—a thing almost unknown in Ottoman annals—Mahmoud could take no part in public affairs. Danger to Selim meant danger to Mahmoud and that danger grew day by day. There was no new ally in Constantinople to whom Aimée might turn for help.

It was then that Aimée made the master stroke of sending directly to Napoleon for help. Since the time of Selim's timorous letter to Louis XVI, she had learned more of statecraft and human nature. Napoleon's small regard for women in matters of statecraft might have been modified if he had known the inspiration that sent the emissary to him seeking aid, an emissary bringing an offer most effectively calculated to win that aid, a direct appeal to his most dominant trait, his over-swollen pride, a suggestion that Selim was willing to accord formal recognition to Napoleon as Emperor, equal in rank to the Padishah himself. No other sovereign had as yet recognized Napoleon as Emperor, although this had been his keenest desire ever since he had placed the imperial crown upon his own head on December 2nd, 1804. The King

of England and the Czar of Russia still persisted in addressing him, when they addressed him directly at all, with the mere title of "head of the French Government."

Napoleon had even hesitated as to whether or not his Oriental ambitions might not be served by Selim's downfall, but the scale was turned. His immediate reply was to send Roux, one of Talleyrand's clever first secretaries who could look at things almost with Napoleon's own eyes, out to Constantinople to obtain from personal conferences direct information as to the real situation. Roux was instructed to return with an immediate report.

He arrived at Constantinople January 22nd, 1806. Even before then, as soon as news of Napoleon's favorable consideration of the appeal had been received, a letter was written by the Grand Vizier to Talleyrand, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which Napoleon was referred to as "*très Sublime Empereur et Padishah de France.*" This letter expressed the greatest friendliness, congratulated Napoleon on his victories, wished him further successes, and concluded with the suggestion of a stronger bond of friendship.

The letter was enclosed to Talleyrand with one from Ruffin, the French Chargé d'Affaires, in which he said the Grand Vizier begged his "promise

to try to move the heart of Your Excellency upon the sad fate of the Ottoman Empire, and to solicit your powerful intervention as immediately as possible with our August Emperor who alone may save this Empire." That the Grand Vizier should use such language spoke volumes for the need of help. In truth the empire was falling apart into anarchy. The Janissaries were in open revolt against any progress toward a better civil or military organization. Never since Constantine gave his name to the city had it been more defenseless to a foreign foe. The throne of the Ottomans was about to be seized by a band of brigands in the name of a weakling, a band of brigands playing into the hands of Russia.

Upon his arrival Roux promptly found that Aimée's chamberlain was the source of authority, that his leaning toward France had not been exaggerated. Ten days after Roux's arrival the Sultan published an imperial decree announcing the recognition of Napoleon as "Imperator and Padishah."

So menacing was the Russian Envoy's protest that he even threatened the use of force to compel withdrawal of the recognition. Nor was this an idle threat. Russia was ready for any pretext to seize Constantinople.

Roux left on February 14th. He had had

ample evidence of the friendliness of the overtures to Napoleon and had the fullest knowledge of the necessities of the situation. With Napoleon's uncanny judgment of men and emergencies, the answer, complete and perfect, was the sending of General Sebastiani.

Before Sebastiani set out a remarkable letter arrived from Ibrahim Effendi, Aimée's chamberlain and the Imperial Minister of the Interior. This letter was enclosed to Talleyrand with one from Ruffin giving a verbal communication from Ibrahim in which the latter related in detail a conversation with Selim at Aimée's palace, in which Selim recounted his efforts toward friendly relationship with France, beginning with his message to Louis XVI, and telling how he had waited at the beginning of his reign for a voice in reply, how his hopes had been frustrated by the invasion of Egypt, leading him to turn to other powers, to yield to their demands though opposed to his own wishes. He had not only been greatly hurt by this action of France but the result was shame and confusion to him in his own court. Now he could again show the cordial friendship he had always felt for France. These words spoken by Aimée's own representative were unquestionably hers, approved by Selim. As Ruffin said, in the letter enclosing Ibrahim's to Talleyrand,

never before were such papers seen by a European minister.

These letters immediately followed Roux. They were immediately followed by Mouhib, as Ambassador Extraordinary from Selim to Napoleon, nominally for the purpose of formal recognition of Napoleon as Emperor of France and felicitation upon this dignity but really for the purpose of supplementing the appeal for help already made. Mouhib arrived in Paris May 21st, 1806, eight days before Sebastiani set out for Constantinople.

This additional urgent request for aid, couched in terms of a renewal of the good understanding existing formerly between France and Turkey and of a proposal of alliance between Selim and Napoleon, was further enforced by magnificent presents from the Sultan, calculated to appeal to Napoleon's imagination. Ruffin, who saw these presents before Mouhib left, describes them:—jewelry, aigrettes, a string of pearls, enamelled boxes set with brilliants, trappings of state for horses, embroidered kerchiefs, India prints, camelots of angora, precious stuffs from India, sixty Cashmere shawls.

Napoleon was now used to homage. He had humbled the two Emperors at Austerlitz and had married Eugene Beauharnais to the Princess Augusta, daughter of the King of Bavaria. But

tribute from the Orient—Turkey and India were always present in his dreams of empire—was sweet stuff for his pride to feed upon.

Mademoiselle Avrillon, who saw the distribution of these presents by Napoleon, who knew nothing about them except that they came from the Grand Signor, nevertheless observed that Napoleon divided the balance, after the Empress had chosen what she wished for herself, "so methodically that it seemed as if he were dividing a conquered kingdom among a number of allies."

Shortly after the news was received in Constantinople of Napoleon's favorable action on Roux's report and of his appointment of General Sebastiani in answer to Selim's appeal for help, another box was sent to Paris. This box is described in the following letter of Ruffin to Talleyrand, dated July 5th, 1806.

M. Conti will have the honor of delivering to Your Excellency a large square box tied up with cords and sealed with the seal of the family of the Ottoman Ambassador at Paris to whom it is addressed with the accompanying packet of letters. The whole was consigned to me by M. Franchini to be sent to His Excellency Mouhibb Effendy at Paris; we believe we know the contents of the box although they have sought to conceal them from us. There are thirteen portfolios of morocco, three large ones with locks, one for His

Majesty, the second for His Imperial Highness, Eugene Napoleon of France, and the third for Your Excellency; the nine smaller ones are for Her Majesty the Empress and for the Princesses and Ladies of the Court. I have only conjectures on this subject; inasmuch as Isaac Bey asked me before the departure of Mouhibb Effendy to write for him the names as they ought to appear on the Portfolios that the Grand Vizier was having made; and that the same Isaac Bey sent me two of them that I might say if they seemed appropriate. I do not know why the Grand Vizier has since wished to make a mystery of this parcel which is being sent.

The said Isaac Bey has also asked me to facilitate the transmission to a certain M. Abro, No. 16 rue des Mathurins, Paris, of two boxes in oilcloth bearing this address. As I am ignorant both of their contents and of the person to whom they are destined, I take the liberty of sending the whole to Your Excellency begging you to acknowledge the receipt of them to me.

Franchini, from whom Ruffin received the box, was Ruffin's own dragoman, a most experienced man in Turkish affairs, who enjoyed the confidence of the inner group in the Seraglio. He it was who went with Galib to France in 1802.

Ruffin's mystification was not surprising. The box obviously came from the Seraglio and not from Mouhib's harem. The ladies there were not sending presents to Napoleon, Josephine, Eugene and Talleyrand. It is equally obvious that Selim

would not send a communication under the seal of Mouhib's family. He had just been sending gifts most openly. The box came in such a way that Ruffin had no doubt of the authority behind the gift. It could only have come from Aimée. What was in it? And who was M. Abro?

Following Ruffin's advice Sebastiani, notwithstanding the terrible journey through the fierce summer heat of the Balkans, was accompanied by his wife. She was, according to the Duchess d'Abrantès, one of the most charming women of that time. The Duchess adds, in her Memoirs, that Madame Sebastiani

> was the daughter of the Marchioness de Coigny, a woman equally celebrated for beauty and talent. Fanny de Coigny inherited all her mother's charms. She had fair hair, a delicate complexion, a captivating smile, and a figure as light and airy as a sylph. In addition to these graces of person, she possessed a fund of talent and amiability. I loved her well, and she also loved me. I know not whether her daughter, the Marchioness de Praslin, has any good portrait of her; at all events, I hope she is aware that her mother was one of the most fascinating women of her day. Unfortunately, she was cut off in the morning of her life, or her graceful pen, like that of Lady Montagu, might have portrayed in interesting colors the wonders of the Seraglio.

Had she lived she would not now be very young, for she was something older than I. But no doubt she would still have been charming.

Sebastiani, in addition to his detailed formal instructions as an ambassador, was the bearer of important private instructions from Napoleon to guide him in the emergency he was sent to meet. He arrived at Constantinople on August 10th, 1806. The nature of Madame Sebastiani's credentials can be guessed from the fact that she was received with great favor in the Harem.

Napoleon's faith in Sebastiani, the dashing, handsome, young Corsican, who, but for the Revolution, would probably have ended his days in a monastery, was fully justified by the activity, spirit and audacity displayed by this brave soldier and diplomat. He saved the day for Selim.

With victory at last almost within her grasp, Mustapha's mother found herself again outgeneralled. She and her party in their sly unwisdom clumsily imitated the success of the French faction by making overtures to the Russians and to the English for similar help. A British fleet was the best counter to Napoleon.

The British, when they saw Constantinople rapidly falling under the sway of Napoleon, sent a fleet, but not quite soon enough. Sebastiani had a long start.

That Arbuthnot, the British ambassador, had substantial reasons in sending for the fleet with the primary purpose of compelling Sebastiani to leave Constantinople is evident from his summary of Sebastiani's activities in his report to the British Foreign Office:

The French Faction, for I can call it by no other name, had totally seized all the authority of Government. . . .

General Sebastiani had almost daily conferences at the Porte; he was frequently, although in direct opposition to Custom and Etiquette, admitted to private audiences by the Sultan; whilst on one particular and marked occasion, when I strove so anxiously to prevent the Russian War, that honour was refused to me;—He was decorated with the Insignia of the Crescent, which, however trifling the Circumstance may appear, was highly disrespectful to us, as out of gratitude for British victories (in Egypt against the French) the order itself had been created;—He obtained the disclosure of my Confidential Correspondence with the Porte, as will have appeared by the Publication in the *Moniteur* of my letter of the 13th of December to the Dragoman of the Porte;—He was so become the ally of the Porte, that, as I mentioned at the time and as the *Moniteur* now confirms, he supplied the Turkish Ships with Sailors, and to make the connection with France more striking, the badge on their hats was the tricolor Cockade united with the Crescent;—and, to crown the whole, the entire

management of military affairs was entrusted to him; and he it was who gave the Plans of defense which, according to his advice and under his Inspection, were so immediately executed. In short, so avowedly had the Embassador of His Majesty's Enemy become the Soul of the Ottoman Councils, and this at a time when Great Britain was affectedly talked of as the best friend of Turkey, that had the arrival of Your Lordship's Instructions been delayed, I should have thought it necessary to call upon the Porte for an explanation of Her conduct; and should have declared to Her that, as the Minister of a Power at War with France, my presence was not compatible with the Services which She had chosen to accept from the French Embassador, and with the behavior observed towards him.

If such ought in my opinion to have been my conduct had I received no instructions, Your Lordship may easily imagine that I was highly pleased to have your Authority and Direction for requiring the Porte to choose between France and the Allies—and it is to be observed, that, as M. Sebastiani was no longer contending merely for a Superiority of Influence, but was now the Military Director of the Turks,—the forcing the Porte to make a choice was far more necessary when I received the Instructions than when Your Lordship wrote them.

The facts too fully proved—not only that French influence prevailed—but that French assistance was sought for and received.

13

This report was made after Arbuthnot left Constantinople. The events leading up to his departure are among the most crucial in history.

The fleet, under Admiral Duckworth, braved the Dardanelles, but owing to an adverse wind failed to reach Constantinople and anchored off the Princes' Islands, below Constantinople, on February 20th, 1807.

Selim's more disloyal ministers at first prevailed upon him to agree to yield at this show of force. Selim asked Sebastiani to depart. The only power who could have changed this order was Aimée, seconded probably by the bold-spirited young Mahmoud.

The order *was* changed and Sebastiani given supreme command. Selim was galvanized into astonishing activity. With the leadership of Sebastiani and with the help of French engineers and artillery officers, whose timely arrival had been arranged by Sebastiani, the patriotism and resolution of the Turkish people were roused to the frantic point of fanaticism where they would all perish rather than submit. In carrying out Sebastiani's plans they seemed to perform a miracle in almost immediately putting the city in a state of defense. All along the shore fortifications were

erected and mounted with a surprising number of cannon.

Selim said that he would not negotiate with the English as long as their fleet was on this side of the Dardanelles. One of Sebastiani's orders given at this time should not be forgotten. Arbuthnot, when he made up his mind to leave Constantinople to join the British fleet then ready to force the Dardanelles and capture Constantinople, by the ruse of asking all the British merchants in Constantinople to dinner on the vessel on which he was sailing before he informed them of his plans, had in effect compelled them to leave their families in Constantinople, including even his own.

Sebastiani sent a dragoman around to all the ladies who had been left behind in this unexpected manner to assure them of the safety of their persons and property, and also of the safety of their husbands if any had remained behind. As a nation, he said, he would do England all the injury in his power, but it was unworthy the representative of a great power to distress individuals.

It is also worthy of recollection as a recognition of this spirit involving a similar generous and self-respecting attitude between adversaries that the place I found this order quoted was in a copy of the London *Times* of that time.

Owing to the continued adverse wind, the British

fleet was unable to proceed beyond the Princes' Islands, where they were out of the range of the city. The wind remained steadily against them, except for a few hours on the 22nd. At that crucial moment a boat suddenly started toward them with a flag of truce. It was Isaac Bey—Isaac, Mouhib or Galib were always turning up at such times—who told them a cock-and-bull story about the dragoman of the Porte being about to come out with important messages and begged them to wait for his arrival. Another boat with a flag of truce was actually seen in the distance, but it never came out. The wind changed and continued to blow steadily against Duckworth's fleet.

When Arbuthnot and Duckworth found that they had miscalculated on the strength behind Sebastiani, when they found him more firmly entrenched in power than before, the temper of the people so stirred that the party of Mustapha did not dare raise a hand to drive out Sebastiani, and found the rapidly increasing armament of the city and of the straits so efficiently placed that instead of a defenseless city ready to fall at a show of force they were faced by formidable batteries, and the Dardanelles becoming a death trap, then the fleet sailed away. The city of nearly a million souls went mad with shouts of triumph.

On their first passage of the Dardanelles the fleet

lost 38 men killed and 100 wounded. On their return they lost two vessels, 137 men killed and 412 wounded.

It was touch-and-go the first few days whether the French faction could keep the upper hand and whether the guns could be gotten in place before the wind changed. If Sebastiani had not been so energetic in his preparations, if Duckworth had come a little sooner, if Sebastiani had not had the support of Aimée, or if Napoleon had sent a diplomat instead of a general, Constantinople would inevitably have fallen to the mastery of the British, —a theme for endless speculation. With British administration firmly seated on the shores of the Bosphorus making an India of the Ottoman Empire, the Balkan Problem, the source of so many wars these last hundred years, would have been vastly different.

The person whose influence prevented this great change in world history was the mother of Mahmoud, and her fight was not with England but with the mother of Mustapha.

14

What the mother of Mustapha, her partisans and Duckworth's fleet failed to bring about was brought about by the death of Madame Sebastiani

on May 5th, 1807. Broken-hearted, Sebastiani begged only to be allowed to leave that dreadful place and soon left it forever.

Already the forces of anarchy were rapidly gaining the upper hand. Disorder increased everywhere. The inevitable reaction against the power of the progressive party, inevitable because of the element of foreign influence that caused it to be known as the French faction, grew stronger and finally triumphed. On May 30th, 1807, Mustapha's mother, with the aid of her old fellow-minded conspirators among the Janissaries, deposed Selim and put Mustapha, a weak-minded puppet in her hands, upon the throne.

Mustapha IV was not only weaker than Selim III, but had none of Selim's good qualities. The victorious Janissaries, freely licensed to plunder, "burned the veil of moderation with a fury like that of hell-fire." A semi-official assassin was sent to Brusa, the retreat where Youssouf thought to find safety for himself and his riches, and there killed him. Ibrahim, Aimée's right hand man, and others associated with the liberal party were hunted out and killed. Six of the more able of the liberal group in the Seraglio escaped death, among them Galib.

Napoleon thought he knew what all this meant. As soon as he learned of it, in spite of Sebastiani's

earnest advice, he executed a right-about-face in his Turkish policy and struck hands with Alexander at Tilsit on a plan for the dismemberment of Turkey, reserving to himself Constantinople and the lion's share.

Napoleon was entirely justified in assuming that the régime of the friends of France at Constantinople was at an end. He could not guess how short-lived would be the power of his enemies there. Early in 1808 the British were asked by Mustapha's Foreign Minister to send an ambassador to arrange the terms of peace. Adair was sent in response to this invitation but before his arrival in Constantinople the power of the mother of Mustapha had ended.

15

The new rulers (Mustapha and his faction) in their natural stupidity had removed one of the generals, Mustapha Bairactar, Pasha of Rustchuk, from the command of his troops and had thereby mortally offended him. Bairactar was a brave and steadfast countryman, good-natured and generous, who had won honor, respect and riches in his native Bulgaria. His enemies had, to be sure, a good reason for removing him. He had in fact long been one of the strongest of the allies

of the French faction outside the Seraglio, but his humiliation made him all the more eager to lend his honest strength to the plans of the group conspiring to restore Selim, the rightful Padishah, to the throne.

This group, working in close touch with friends still in the Seraglio, planned a bold *coup d'état.* They knew the incapacity of Mustapha and his mother, the yellow streak that would always cause failure when brought to the test, and they knew the inherent disloyalty of the Janissaries.

Almost before Mustapha and his mother realized the danger threatening them, Bairactar, with an army behind him, was at the Seraglio, demanding the restoration of Selim. Without hindrance Bairactar passed through the outer Gate of the Cold Fountain. The Middle Gate (the Gate of Peace) had been hastily closed, but was easily forced open and Bairactar was before the Gate of Felicity, halted by its brazen panels. His demand that Selim be restored to the throne met with no response but silence.

With Bairactar hammering at the gate, Mustapha and his mother sent Faittah, Nesir, Mehmed, Hadji Ali of Bagdad and a dozen of the guard to kill Selim and Mahmoud. With Mustapha the last survivor of the Ottoman dynasty, none would dare lift a finger against him. The Turks believe

that with the last of the blood of Osman, the Empire will perish.

When the assassins reached the Princes' Cage, only Taiher Effendi drew sword to defend Selim, and Selim told him to run to warn Mahmoud. Selim defended his own life courageously, not because he cared for it but to give Mahmoud a moment in which to save his life. That moment was just enough.

When Selim was falling beneath the swords of his enemies, Taiher had reached Mahmoud and with Mehmed Bey and the Tartar, Achmet Hafiz, and two of Mahmoud's servants, the black Anber Aga and Hafiz Issa, they were hastening out a rear door as the assassins of Selim were rushing in at the front, holding their bloody swords aloft.

At the same moment a Georgian slave, a woman of great strength, known as the "Powerful," belonging to Mahmoud's mother, reached the room and seizing a brazier full of coals, hurled it full in the faces of the onrushing assassins, staggering them another precious moment. Through a large chimney, with Anber's help, Mahmoud reached the roof and stood ready over the opening at the top with his sword to meet his enemies.

In the meantime, Bairactar, at first hesitating to break down the sacred door, finally, with growing fear for Selim, ordered the gate battered down.

Thoroughly aroused, he stormed in at the head of his troops. The Seraglio seemed silent and deserted. The servants and guards had fled to secret hiding places. With the phantasmagoric labyrinth of passages, gardens, walls, pavilions, mosques, baths, fountains, palaces before him, all a mystery to him, Bairactar ran wildly one way and another until he suddenly came upon Selim's body lying on a stone bench before the great Throne Room, and weeping, fell upon his knees in despair.

Then, roused to unrestrained rage, he towered up, crying, "Revenge upon the Traitors!" and rushed on to save Mahmoud. Bairactar's troops half-wild by nature, inspired by his rage, overran the Seraglio. With their approach Mahmoud's assailants fled. Mahmoud's attendants helped him down from the roof and, with face "lighting up like a sparkling jewel lifted from a dark pit," he advanced to meet Bairactar, who thundered out, "Who is that man?"

"He is our Master, Sultan Mahmoud, Padishah and Caliph of the Faithful," answered Achmet Hafiz. "We have shielded him. It is for you to complete what you have so well begun."

"O my Master," Bairactar said, "I came to place your cousin again upon his throne. Instead of that—if only I had first been struck blind—I

have seen his dead body. Now there remains to me only one trust, to bring you to the throne. But let us now seek the criminals who killed Selim."

Mahmoud spoke for the first time, his powerful voice dominating the throng.

"I will find them in good time. Dismiss your soldiers. Put down your weapons and follow me to the Hall of the Sacred Mantle."

There the Sandjak Sherif, the Sacred Standard, and the other holy relics of the Prophet are kept. None may enter this room except the Sultan and a few officials of the highest rank. There a new Sultan offers his first prayer.

The perfect calmness, the strength, with which the young Prince spoke these words, when all the rest were still shaken from the danger to him just averted, told them that at last after so many years, Islam had a soldier, a leader, a strong man, for Sultan.

Bairactar laid down his weapons, all except a little jewelled dagger. He asked that he might carry this because it was a gift from Selim from which he had never been parted. This request Mahmoud granted.

Mahmoud remained long at prayer. While Bairactar waited at the door, he saw Mustapha standing at the brink of a pool near at hand.

Mustapha began a sneering remark about Mahmoud's lack of gratitude. Bairactar called out, "Tell him to get away at once, else I may, with my own hands, do that which I should always regret."

At that, Mustapha's mother who had come up with him, but remained at a safe distance, fell to cursing and scolding Bairactar, beside herself with impotent virulence at her final defeat.

Bairactar watched her with silent contempt as she and her son were led away by his men.

The ceremonies of the day were concluded with the installation of Bairactar as Grand Vizier. At nine o'clock in the morning, he had entered the city. At five o'clock in the afternoon, the cannon of the Seraglio boomed in salute to the public proclamation of Mahmoud as Padishah. This was the 28th of July, 1808.

16

At once Mahmoud impressed all by the enlightenment of his spirit and the strength of his character. With a gesture as of a lifetime of authority, he stepped from obscurity to the throne and grasped at once the reins of power.

The zeal of youth carried him too rapidly forward when he set about putting his house in order, starting upon his plans of reform and advancement

for his Empire. He soon found the danger from his enemy, the watchful and jealous mother of Mustapha. Not for one moment did she forget that her son was the rightful monarch. Her intrigues were unceasing.

Within a few months, the Janissaries rose in fierce insurrection, destroyed the barracks of Mahmoud's new troops, their tents, baggage, stores, provisions, his military schools, his printing presses, all signs of innovation. Outwardly as bold as Bairactar six thousand Janissaries stormed the Seraglio to restore Mustapha. They started fires and had almost captured Bairactar when he set fire to a powder magazine and blew himself up with a number of his assailants. Mahmoud met the oncoming mob with the calm announcement that Mustapha was dead. The Janissaries could only prostrate themselves before Mahmoud; in him alone the sacred blood of Osman survived.

Nevertheless the Janissaries held the power and compelled Mahmoud to yield to their demands. For five months of disturbance, amounting almost to civil war, he could not find a man he could trust as Grand Vizier who would be acceptable to them. Finally they compromised on an aged Georgian, one of the former slaves from Georgia who had held power under Selim's mother. After this almost complete breakdown of the Turkish state,

Mahmoud adopted a more prudent policy and moved more warily toward his goal.

He kept his own counsel, made his own plans, confided only in his mother and continued faithfully to follow her enlightened ideas of reform and progress. He even wrote himself the more important state documents, but he followed all the accepted precedents. The firmness of his grip upon the helm of state became known only in time by the general public.

17

Mahmoud remained a friend to Napoleon until 1810. His first step in foreign affairs had been to send through Mouhib at Paris a message of friendship to Napoleon. This message reached Napoleon in September, 1808. Napoleon did not bother to answer until March, 1812. In the meantime on December 16th, 1809, Napoleon divorced Josephine. On March 11th, 1810, he married Marie Louise, daughter of Francis I, Emperor of Austria. It is well known that this marriage at a time when Napoleon was ostensibly negotiating for the hand of Alexander's sister was one cause for the personal bitterness on the part of the Emperor of Russia toward Napoleon.

That the deadly blow administered by Mahmoud

to Napoleon may have had its impulse from the perfidy of his divorce of Josephine has never been pointed out by any historian.

In the curious way the world has of knowing the truth, the world has always felt that Napoleon's good fortune deserted him when he thrust Josephine away. One reason was the reflection that the influence of Josephine, always exerted to calm him and to hold him back from his more insane projects, might have prevented the Russian war. The chief reason, however, was merely the sympathetic remembrance of her elegant beauty, her grace, her tact, her goodness. The lightness of her conduct in the past was little known and long forgotten.

But Napoleon cared nothing for the slight breath of unpopularity arising from sympathy for Josephine. About the storm his new alliance aroused in the minds of two people in Constantinople he knew nothing. Turkey was only a prize ready for the plucking as soon as he cared to turn his hand in that direction. If he had known how Mahmoud's face was set stony flint against him, if he had known the steel of Mahmoud's determination, if he had known the blow Mahmoud was preparing he would never have delivered himself body and soul into the hands of his enemy.

In putting aside Josephine for the daughter of the

last of the Roman Emperors, Napoleon did more than discard a loving wife and companion of charming personality, for an unloving, selfish girl of eighteen who felt that she was being offered up as a living sacrifice to Moloch; he cast aside a real alliance of friendship for a nominal alliance of interest; firm friends in the House of the Ottomans for false ones in the House of the Hapsburgs; a faithful ally for a treacherous one. Austria betrayed him by promptly sending his secret plans to Russia. With Mahmoud's aid, Napoleon would have crushed Russia and attained his goal of world empire.

The Veiled Empress and her son, the Emperor, in secret heart were prouder of their relationship to the Empress of the French than ever the House of Austria, forced into an ignoble alliance, would deign to be. Aimée and Josephine had in common the memories of the enchanted tropic isle of their youth; by seeming accident each had risen to greatest height of power; and they had the common heritage of a similar strain of nobility of blood. Little wonder that Aimée taught her son love for Josephine, her friend, her cousin, who ruled in a beautiful world of freedom and light where a woman might share publicly the glory of a throne. No wonder as a child Mahmoud vowed in his staunch heart, that, since the only real power his mother might have, would be through him, through

his submission to her wishes, she should have that power. This vow he kept with more than the usual observance of the Ottoman custom. To her alone, could his inner self ever be revealed. With her alone, he shared the light of the wider world of civilization, a light which he saw through her eyes. During her years of loneliness her whole heart was set upon keeping him one of her own people, a Dubuc of Normandy.

In this secret intimate circle where the mother and son shared a world unknown to all about them, Josephine was of all persons the one who seemed closest to them, the only one who seemed a part of that hidden life. They knew about her from Isaac, Essaid, Galib, Mouhib, Ruffin, Franchini, Madame Sebastiani and the rest. In her they seemed to share in the glory of France. To them Josephine seemed their nearest, their only real friend, Napoleon, merely a name, a stranger.

The cruel injury done to the amiable Josephine was to Aimée, who in the midst of her own trials had so long been happy in Josephine's good fortune, the more intensified because she knew as Napoleon had once said that "Josephine had no more sense of resentment than a pigeon."

And no wonder that to Mahmoud, firm, inflexible, Napoleon's breaking of faith toward Josephine was a convincing revelation of his double-

dealing opportunism, an unmasking of the cruelty and selfishness in the heart of a man who was never again to be trusted, power in his hands a menace to the world.

A fundamental trait of Mahmoud's policy, one he had learned through bitter experience, was not to let his enemy know of the intended blow. His mother may have told him of the Martinique proverb that "in war you do not warn your enemy." When he became the bitter enemy of Napoleon, he kept the secret to himself as far as he could and he was good at keeping secrets.

Sebastiani had inculcated the belief that Napoleon's power was irresistible. Latour Maubourg, the French Minister, proclaimed that he trembled at the thought of the result of any opposition to Napoleon, the sovereign who never left an injury unpunished, whose regard for his own glory obliged him to avenge offenses against his dignity in a striking and exemplary manner. "Napoleon," he said, "is an extraordinary man sent by Providence to change the face of Europe and to free it from the maritime yoke of England."

Despite this kind of bombastic talk—nor did it sound so bombastic in 1810—and some high-handed acts, the ascendancy of French influence still remained secure and unquestioned until about February 10th, 1810. Then at a conference of

Latour Maubourg with the Turkish Foreign Minister,—it happened to be the first after the news of Josephine's divorce had reached Constantinople—the French Minister found a very different attitude from that to which he had long been accustomed. It was reported to Adair, the English Minister, that Latour Maubourg found "it impossible to make the slightest impression or to obtain a favorable or even dubious answer to any one of his demands," and that "very angry and very resolute language was used by the Turkish Minister to him." Thereafter Adair saw the waning of French influence; neither he nor the French Minister really knew why. Latour Maubourg was puzzled. Adair dubious over the new favor he found bestowed upon him. On February 22nd Adair was informed that upon his proposed departure he was to have the honor of being received at a public audience of leave by the Sultan, an honor never before granted to an English Ambassador. Adair's situation which had been "extremely unpleasant," he said, had now become "all I can wish."

When in March Adair learned of the intended marriage of Napoleon with a Princess of the House of Austria, he was in despair at the consequences he saw resulting from the alliance of France and Austria. He felt sure that they would arrange a peace between Russia and Turkey and bring both

into the Continental League and with that, he wrote, "every prospect of recovering her ancient footing in Europe will be closed on Great Britain perhaps forever." He saw only "certain ruin of the British name and nation."

What really happened; Mahmoud set against Napoleon, Alexander alarmed by the Austrian marriage, Russia embroiled with France and confirmed in her jealousy of Austria. A sudden and complete change in Mahmoud's policy took place. The marked friendship and deference to Napoleon was at an end. The new attitude of hostility was evidenced to Latour Maubourg chiefly by the cutting off of communication with him. Mahmoud took very good care not to let Latour Maubourg know of the alliance he was proposing to make with England, Napoleon's consistent and determined enemy.

So careful was his secrecy that he did not let his own ministers know of his plans. The story of how, for that reason, his efforts were thwarted is a striking illustration of this change of his policy; it is illuminating as to the working of his mind; it reflects the disadvantages of his education by his mother whose acquaintance with the western world was only of the days of the "*ancien régime.*"

Adair was received in a ceremonious audience of leave by Mahmoud's Ministers on May 28th, and

finally was received in state by Mahmoud on July 10th, 1810. In Adair's suite with Stratford Canning were two of the latter's young fellow students at Cambridge, Hobhouse (afterwards Lord Broughton) and Lord Byron. Lord Broughton describes these audiences in great detail. Mahmoud's physiognomy, he says, "was mild and benevolent, but expressive and full of dignity." His appearance was of "indescribable majesty." He looked older than his years. Panagios Morousi acted as interpreter. The Sultan presented the Ambassador with a silver purse. When Adair opened this purse upon his return to the English Palace he found it to contain a friendly letter in Mahmoud's own hand to the King of England.

Adair didn't know quite what to make of it. When the Foreign Office in London read a translation of the letter, they thought its unusual character and amicable phrases nothing more than oriental hyperbole. They folded it carefully, endorsed it

The Grand Signor
to
The King
o/ June 1810
R/ Dec. 14, —
Mr. Adair's
letter of Recredence.

They even invented a plausible name for it, and placed it securely in a pigeonhole. George III of course never saw the letter. He was no longer mentally competent. The letter was never answered or even acknowledged.

What happened between the Sultan's final audience and Adair's embarkation on July 14th, 1810, is best told in Adair's report to Wellesley, the Foreign Secretary, dated at Malta, August 1st, 1810:

I have the honour of informing your Lordship, that on the evening previous to my embarcation at Constantinople, Prince Morousy, the dragoman of the Porte, sent to entreat a secret interview with me on a business stated by him to be of such extreme urgency and delicacy as to require its immediate communication, and likewise that every possible precaution should be taken in the arrangement of our meeting, so as to preclude all suspicion of it at Constantinople. On pressing to know the nature of this business, I could only learn that the Prince had on that day had an audience with the Sultan for more than three hours, unknown to any of the ministers, and that it was intended to make some communication to me, but whether privately from the Prince himself, or by order of the Sultan, the messenger could not say.

I appointed the interview, therefore, for the ensuing evening on board the Salsette.

Prince Morousy came accordingly as soon as it was

dark, and read from a written paper the substance of a message which the Sultan, in the interview of the preceding day, had commanded him to deliver to me as from his own mouth. The message was to the following effect:—

That as I was about to depart for my native country, and had always appeared to have in view the interests of the Porte, and the improvement of the connection with Great Britain, the Sultan expected from my friendship that I would convey directly to his Majesty the assurance of his unalterable resolution to maintain forever the peace he had concluded with his Majesty. That the great events which had taken place of late years in Europe made it evident that Turkey and Great Britain had the strongest natural interest in each other's prosperity and preservation. That Great Britain had always appeared to him to be the only one of the great Powers that had nothing to covet which belonged to Turkey. That on his part he was confident that the King would be convinced of his sincerity, by his having rejected the late overtures from Russia immediately, and without discussion; and more especially when it should be made known to his Majesty that if he would have consented to break his engagements with Great Britain, he could have obtained, and could even now obtain, a peace on terms infinitely more favourable than those specified in the Russian proposal. These dispositions on his part would, he was persuaded, induce his Majesty to step forward to his assistance in the

present difficulties of his empire, and to make common cause with him against Russia, whether by strengthening his efforts to carry on the war, or by refusing to make peace with that Power except on terms which should include the interests of Turkey.

His Imperial Highness enjoined me to represent these matters to my sovereign, and to all the members of his government in terms suitable to the emergency, as well as to his own friendly dispositions; in proof of which dispositions, and as a mark of his satisfaction personally toward myself, he desired my acceptance of a token—which at the same moment was tendered to me by Prince Morousy—of his remembrance and particular regard.

As your Lordship will perceive there is nothing in the above message however flattering the circumstance of its being sent to me from the Sultan in person, which might not have been communicated in open day by the Reis Efendi or the Caimacan, it will (I should think) also appear to your Lordship, as I confess it did to me, that the main, if not the sole object of this visit from Prince Morousy was the delivery of the present with which he concluded it. Under this impression I replied to that part of the Sultan's message which related to his political interests, by assuring the Prince that his Imperial Highness did me but justice in relying upon my zeal for his service on all occasions; that immediately on my return to England I would not fail to represent to his Majesty's Government the whole of what had passed between us by his Highness' command;

but that I must beg leave to decline accepting his Highness' present. That I was by no means unmindful of the intended honour, nor insensible to the flattering reflection of my having attracted the Sultan's notice to the friendly principles on which I had endeavoured to conduct my embassy; but that he must be aware that the circumstances under which this mark of the Sultan's favour was offered placed me under a necessity of refusing it. That although I made no pretensions to any particular distinction from his Imperial Highness after the unprecedented honour which he had granted to me of a public audience, still it was my feeling that such distinction as his Highness, in his extreme condescension, might intend me ought to be conferred in the most public manner. That nothing, therefore, short of my Royal Master's commands would induce me to receive a present from which all mark of distinction appeared to be cautiously removed by its being tendered to me at night, and with a mystery totally unsuited to the dignity of the character I had recently filled at the Sultan's Court.

The Prince, in the most earnest terms deprecated my sending this answer to the Sultan, particularly if accompanied by the return of his present. After much altercation, therefore, I consented to carry it to England, the seal remaining unbroken, on condition that he should faithfully report to the Sultan the very words in which I then again repeated my determination.

If it should appear to your Lordship that I have

done wrong in complying with the Sultan's desire, even so far as to take charge of his intended present, I trust that your Lordship will consider the difficulty of the situation in which I found myself. Your Lordship, to whom Oriental customs are so familiar, will see that no choice was left me except between this expedient and an act directly and personally offensive to the Sultan. Next to returning the present, it was my wish to consign it to the custody of Mr. Canning until his Majesty's pleasure concerning its eventual disposal could be known; but to this was opposed my word of honour to Prince Morousy to whom I had promised an absolute secrecy, and who repeatedly and warmly alleged that his situation, and very possibly his life itself would be the forfeit if the circumstance of his visit were known to any human being in Constantinople.

All this leads me to fear that the chief motive in the Sultan's mind in sending me his favours by night was to avoid offending France by conferring upon me any mark of distinction beyond that of my private audience in the Seraglio. Your Lordship, therefore, to whose liberal judgment on this occasion I submit my motives with perfect confidence, will allow me to express a most anxious hope that some expedient may be found to relieve me from the necessity of accepting a gift which in my sight could only be valuable by being offered in the most public manner, but which becomes burthensome when deprived of its publicity by a fear in the giver of offending the enemies of my country.

George Canning's pet name for Robert Adair was "Baba Dara Adul Phoola."

In March, 1811, young Stratford Canning, who succeeded Adair as Ambassador at Constantinople, was worried over the fact that Mahmoud's ministers still knew nothing about Mahmoud's efforts to gain English friendship and yet Canning was inclined to think a reply should be sent notwithstanding the unprecedented nature of the letter to George III. It was the old story of Selim and Vergennes over again.

Canning's letter to Adair shows the kind of mistake Napoleon would never have made. This letter, dated March 17th, 1811, marked private and confidential is as follows:

As a Dispatch which I have just written to the Marquis of Wellesley, respecting the Present offered to you by the Sultan, will probably be communicated to you by His Lordship, I take the Liberty of writing you a few words upon the subject in this private manner,—you will no doubt perceive that the temporary delay which I have proposed to put to the execution of His Lordship's Instructions, is only a delicate manner of referring the affair to the further reflection of Government. You will naturally suppose I would not do this, without having the strongest reasons to believe that I should fail in my duty if I were to act otherwise, and that it is not without much pain that I find myself un-

able to be instrumental in obtaining for you what is desired. Perhaps I am wrong; but as every man in a publick situation must examine his own judgment, if he wishes to discharge his duty with fidelity, I am sure you will not think worse of me for exercising mine in the present instance.

It is not that I presume to set my opinion in direct opposition to yours—I say to *yours*, because I take it for granted that the Government must of necessity view the matter through the medium of your representations: —but I conceive that there are some circumstances known to me, and unknown to you which set two different cases before our eyes. I am anxious that you should be made acquainted with these circumstances, before I venture, in defiance of them *to expose the publick interests to a great and perhaps unnecessary danger*. To state them to you as shortly as possible, they are simply these:—The publick honours paid to you on your retirement from this Embassy, are as great as were ever paid to any Russian Ambassador whatever—with the exception of Kutusoff, who subsequently to his audiences, received from several of the principal ministers, rich presents, which, however, he repaid with others of similar nature.

On several occasions since your departure the Sultan has shown a disposition to act without the interference or knowledge of his ministers—as if he thought for himself, and acted oftentimes on the sole impulse of his own feelings. I have myself experienced this; and am firmly persuaded that he makes a distinction between

his own personal sentiments and those of his ministers.

The offer he made to you is *still* unknown to his Ministers.

He has lately written a Hatti-scheriff in answer to an official paper, in which *he openly declared his belief that the French are liars.* (Italics are Canning's. Mahmoud of course must have meant the French Government, Napoleon, and not the people of his mother.)

I do not presume to make any remark on these circumstances, I will not even recall to your recollection how notoriously the Turks are averse from opening a door to the establishment of new precedents or the advancement of new pretensions—I will even abstain from asking you with what face the Sultan can inform his Ministers of a measure which has so long been concealed from them? But I will take the liberty of enclosing for your perusal a letter which P. Moroozi has written me on the subject. It contains a great deal of what he probably said to you before—but you may as well see it.

One word more and I have done. Are you sure that the Sultan does not expect some sort of answer to the message with which his Present was accompanied? Are you sure that he does not flatter himself that a word directly from himself will effect more than twenty times the number of messages and proposals sent officially through his ministers?

Notwithstanding all this, however, if I can contrive to hit upon a favorable moment before I hear again from England on the subject, I think I shall, perhaps, try my chances, especially, if I understand that the Sultan

expresses in the meantime much impatience at not receiving an answer about it. Do you think that P. Moroozi ventured to believe his the message you sent in the first instance?

Canning was only twenty-four at this time, Mahmoud, twenty-five.

With this letter was enclosed the one from Panagios Morousi, Mahmoud's interpreter, a letter considered with Mahmoud's previous letter most pregnant with significance to any one who knew Mahmoud and who would read between the lines.

Morousi's letter refers to his interview with Adair as a most delicate and important matter. In replying to Canning's objections to the irregularity and secrecy of this interview he says:

In regard to the Present given, at that time by His Highness, my august Sovereign, to His Excellency through me, and the publicity that is desired to give this overture in order that His Excellency may accept this mark of favor from His Highness, since it is considered that when such an overture is concealed under a veil of mystery it is contrary to the usages of diplomacy and offends the proprieties.

I believe the civilized courts of Europe have two ways of dealing with political affairs and of maintaining their relations as well as their interests. One is official and the other confidential and friendly. Undeniable proof of the accuracy of this interpretation is your *own*

daily conduct, M. le Ministre, at the Porte. I can prove therefore that the overture in question is of the second class.

Morousi then recounts the termination of Adair's ambassadorship, Adair's formal leave-taking, and that the next day after the official announcement of Canning's assumption of the ambassadorship he (Morousi) told Adair of his desire to discuss with him an important secret. As Adair's functions as ambassador had ended, a conference was arranged at night on board the frigate upon which Adair was to depart. Morousi continues:

All this proves clearly that M. Adair was at that time dismissed from his official functions and was regarded as a private citizen to whom His Highness, in order to show his personal satisfaction with his wise and friendly conduct towards him, wished to make through me the communications of which you know, and to give to him a remembrance and a token of his favor and predilection for the English whom he considers the only real friends of his Empire.

To wish at this time to give publicity to an overture of His Highness, springing from such frank and honest intentions and founded solely upon his esteem and consideration for the English Nation, would be to demonstrate to him that the Court of Great Britain considers of importance only that which is wholly done officially by the Ministers of the Ottoman Empire, and

has little regard for the marks of deference that emanate directly from the august person of His Highness. So accordingly since His Highness considers that the etiquette of the Court has been observed in the manner due to the rank with which M. Adair was invested, and that upon His desire afterwards to give him a mark of His esteem, M. Adair's request that it be also official and public, at once brought to the keen intelligence of His Highness the idea that I have just expressed. His feelings were wounded and wounds to self-esteem ("*amour propre*") are incurable.

This task is extremely delicate and of the highest importance. I am convinced that Great Britain desires only the preservation, the prosperity, and the independence of the Ottoman Empire. That being true, is it therefore proper, above all in the existing circumstances, to wound the self-esteem and to chill the magnanimous heart of him who governs it? Is it consistent with sound policy to estrange His Highness who has braved all other considerations in order to hasten the renewal of intimate relations with Great Britain, the Nation, which in the midst of the general disorder ("*bouleversement*") of Europe has shown an unshakable resolution not to sacrifice its engagements, and is determined to preserve them pure and unblemished?

It is for you to weigh in your wisdom all these considerations and also those that I have had the honor to reveal to you by word of mouth and that I am not able to put on paper.

I am not clever nor am I versed in the dark ways of politics but I believe that instead of drawing attention to the present from His Highness based on the sole intention, as I have had the honor of proving, of expressing his personal esteem of M. Adair, and which in taking up and wishing to give it publicity, might lead to consequences so opposed to the plans and interests of these two friendly powers, would it not be much wiser to cultivate this amicable disposition of His Highness in order to render it useful to the greater interests with which you are charged. I implore you in the name of His Britannic Majesty, both for the preservation of the friendship that happily exists between the English Nation and the Ottoman Empire, to weigh seriously these considerations which my frankness and the conviction I have that the friendship of these two powers is advantageous and is in harmony with their dearest interests, force me to convey to you.

You know, M. le Ministre, what causes me to act with so much ardor in this matter. My attachment to my Sovereign is a guarantee to you of my sincerity. I have the honor to know the steadfastness of his character and I am sure that he will never retreat from the course he has set out upon.

The seriousness of poor Morousi's imploring, pathetic, almost frantic appeal is obvious. His failure to move Canning may have been one of the things that cost him his life the next year.

Canning evidently felt that Mahmoud's

communication with the King through Adair, Canning's old chief, rather than himself, was lacking in proper respect to him, the new ambassador. Why else was he so concerned with Mahmoud's lack of respect for his own ministers? Such a thought one of Mahmoud's ministers would never have even dared conceive. To express it would have been worth his life.

The real crotchet in Canning's mind was that somehow the communication from Mahmoud directly to the King and not through diplomatic channels was subversive of the British Constitution. Foreign potentates must be taught that in dealing with England they deal with the King's Ministers and not with the King. Unfortunately, the study of the British Constitution as developed under the Georges was no part of the curriculum of French convents in the eighteenth century.

The present to Adair was not returned, nor was its acceptance acknowledged. No answer was made to Mahmoud's offer of alliance.

Despite these almost incredible blunders, the instinct of Robert Adair and Stratford Canning was sound. In the distant eons of history the democratic principle of government by responsible ministers and diplomacy (which in the year of our Lord 1923 we call new) between the representatives of public opinion of the peoples of the earth

will be seen to be of greater moment than the defeat of Napoleon or the fate of Stamboul.

18

While Canning was quibbling over red-tape with Morousi, Napoleon, drunk with power, was preparing for the conquest of Russia. In 1810, he had begun the strengthening and arming of fortresses along the Russian frontier and, beginning early in 1811, he steadily gathered his armies, preparing openly and thoroughly for the attack.

At the time this preparation was approaching completion, Mahmoud set about seeking peace with Russia. That at such a time, when he knew his arch enemy was about to be destroyed, he should wish to make peace with his implacable foe, the despoiler of his territories, was inconceivable to all statesmen. Neither the French, nor the British, nor the Russians, nor his own ministers could believe such a thing possible. The Turks have an old saying that "when the Ottomans are at peace with Russia, the plague breaks out again."

The policy of the Russian Grand Chancellor, Romanzoff, was for peace with Napoleon, for an alliance with France. Romanzoff was responsible for the war with Turkey, a war that had cost Russia a hundred thousand men. So bent was he

on continuing this war with Turkey any thought of peace with Mahmoud was out of the question. Even with England, anxious to be Russia's ally against Napoleon, Romanzoff delayed making a treaty of peace until July 18th, 1812. But with Turkey he had no intention of making peace.

The Ottoman Empire in Europe he considered not only potentially Russian territory, but in effect already Russian. A large part was occupied by Russia, the rest within her grasp. His goal was Russia from the Black Sea to the Adriatic and the Ægean, Russia holding Constantinople and the Dardanelles. For nearly six years he had made war against Turkey to that end. He saw no difficulty in smoothing out what little quarrel there was with Napoleon; but giving up the Balkans and the Straits was impossible.

Nevertheless Mahmoud decided to make peace with Russia. A bolder decision no man ever made. By reason of its very startlingness, his action weighed all the heavier in the balance. So poised was the balance, this word of one man dipped the slender, trembling finger of the index ever so slowly, but steadily, certainly, against Napoleon. Poised on one side was the Empire of the World for Napoleon, on the other Mahmoud's own Empire and his life.

For Mahmoud, the margin of safety was so close,

had Sir Robert Wilson's courier bringing news of the defeat of Napoleon been slower in his race, the Janissaries would have seized the power in Stamboul, would have had their enemy by the throat at last. Napoleon staked the greatest prize of power ever dreamed of upon a logically sound judgment that Mahmoud would not, could not, dared not refuse his offers. But the detonating power of an electron of emotion is difficult to calculate. Too late, Napoleon learned of his mistake. Just why his calculation went wrong he probably never knew. The surrounding facts when examined in detail are, however, very significant.

In brief, this was what Mahmoud did. First, he arranged an armistice and sent Galib to Bucharest to negotiate a treaty. Bucharest was the headquarters of the Russian army. Then, in spite of continual delays and difficulties placed by the Russians in the way of arriving at a reasonable treaty, the preliminary treaty was signed on May 17th, 1812 and the Treaty of Bucharest was signed in its final form on May 28th, 1812.

By a strange coincidence, this 28th of May was the last day of Napoleon's stay at Dresden, the period of his greatest height of power and splendor. At Dresden he was truly King of Kings. At this reunion of the ancient royal family of Europe he was head of the house. With incredible magni-

ficence, he received the crowd of lesser sovereigns—Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Westphalia and the rest. In that brilliant, imperial spectacle, the dominating figure was Napoleon, captain of nearly seven hundred thousand fighting men, rallied to his victorious banners from the ends of Europe.

As if to emphasize the hidden dramatic climax of the 28th of May, 1812, in the tragedy of the Man of Destiny, that was the day on which Narbonne brought to Napoleon the final reply of Alexander: "Say clearly to the Emperor that I will positively not be the aggressor. . . . He may cross the Niemen; but never will I sign a peace dictated upon Russian territory. . . . Even though he were master of Moscow I would not in the least consider my cause lost."

Napoleon considered this merely words, words, words, the declamatory pose of the man he called the Talma of the North.

Narbonne, in the manner of his master, had replied to Alexander: "Then, Sire, in that event you would not even be the most powerful monarch in Asia."

So bedrugged was Napoleon with the fumes of vanity that he could believe as well as say: "It is surely a proof of the weakness of human understanding to think it possible to contend against me!"

Before the dawn of the next morning, he was to

set forth to conquer the vastest empire of the earth. No one at Dresden, no one in all his army had the shadow of a doubt of the certainty of his success.

Yet at that moment of the climax of his power, his majesty, his pride, all unsuspected and with the artistic precision of a Greek tragedy, the fatal blow was struck. On that very day, when all the world expected Mahmoud to reap the reward of victory over the Russians without the risk of further fighting, the Treaty of Bucharest was signed. Mahmoud not only made peace with Russia, not only gave to Russia the whole of Bessarabia, including the vital control of the mouths of the Danube, not only gave at Russia's insistence privileges to the people of Servia, Moldavia and Wallachia which ultimately meant freedom to them, but also gave privately to Russia his assurance that the treaty then signed would be ratified and would be kept secret. Kutusoff hurried north to play the first moves in the game Mahmoud planned. It *was* the game Mahmoud planned, not that he set forth a scheme of strategy for the Russians to follow—he did not do that. The Russians stumbled along almost blindly. But to Mahmoud's mind the probable consequences, the almost inevitable consequences, of the action he was taking were clear.

In order to increase the shock that would be

caused by the unexpectedness of the blow to Napoleon, Mahmoud kept the French, British, and even his own ministers in the dark until Napoleon was hopelessly in the trap. Mahmoud even went so far as to have Latour Maubourg's couriers, carrying such meagre information as the French Envoy could gather, intercepted and held up.

How easily he could have imposed his own terms upon Russia, no one knew better than he. But even to despoil Russia, even to save his own country, he would not listen to Napoleon. Mahmoud knew better than the Russians themselves—they were overconfident—the urgent need for their troops in the north.

In organization, equipment, discipline, leadership, the Russian Army of the Danube was superior to that gathered together to oppose the invasion of the French. At Bucharest, there were the old fighter Kutusoff and Tchitchagoff and Count Langeron, the French *émigré*, who in his youth had served in America with Rochambeau. Their army of fifty thousand men was a real army, a veteran army. On August 11th, 1812, Sir Robert Wilson wrote of this army, that he had never made an inspection of troops in higher order for field service. Only in numbers was the army assembling in the north superior, but in war mere numbers are nothing.

Mahmoud did not discuss with his ministers the reasons he had for distrusting Napoleon. They would not have understood, but he knew he was right.

How much he would have liked to talk with some one who could understand, could help him, may be guessed from a trifling incident Sir Robert Wilson records in his diary on July 15th, 1812:

> This morning I went to see the Grand Signor go to the Mosque. The procession was very stately; the preceding led horses finely caparisoned and of noble figure and outline; the dress of the attendants picturesque and novel to Europeans.
>
> The Grand Signor rode a richly-equipped charger, and passed within a yard of me, bending all the gaze of his eyes upon my person, and, contrary to usage, he even turned his head to continue his observation, upon which I was much complimented by bystanders and others.
>
> He looks pale; has a coal-black beard, and a very intelligent expression. I read his countenance attentively and think he merits his character.

The black was hair-dye. Wilson's application for approval of his departure for Russia was then before Mahmoud.

* * *

Having in mind that grim Mahmoud, sitting quietly with his mother under the great cypress

tree beside the pool in her garden, had sealed the fate of Napoleon, the correspondence between the English and the French diplomatic representatives at Constantinople and their respective Ministers of Foreign Affairs reveals a vital episode in the great tragedy then rapidly moving toward the catastrophe in Russia.

In the correspondence we have a picture on one side of Napoleon moving heaven and earth for the mere understanding that he would not be kept in ignorance if Mahmoud struck hands with Russia and not even obtaining a response in time to be of help. On the other we have the British and the Russians doing nothing, making no offer to match Napoleon's and yet winning the victory without knowing when or how.

Stratford Canning begs in vain for instructions from London. Petersburg does nothing but set new difficulties in the way. Courier after courier arrives from Paris with all instructions and authority to Latour Maubourg that could be needed.

Latour Maubourg had been one of Sebastiani's chief assistants and upon Mahmoud's accession had been in good favor at the Porte until Mahmoud learned of Josephine's divorce. Thereafter, for what reason Latour Maubourg did not know, the Foreign Minister refused to receive him. Notwithstanding this, Latour Maubourg early in 1812

was still making every effort through private interviews with ministers friendly to him and otherwise to have the negotiations at Bucharest come to naught.

On February 24th, 1812, he announced that Napoleon was setting out to commence operations against Russia. Early in March, he received from Napoleon a private letter to Mahmoud. This letter, the first Napoleon had ever written Mahmoud, was the kind of communication which might be expected to be especially favorably received by him. He was even addressed as "The Great Emperor of the Mussulmans," but he did not answer the letter.

So sure was Napoleon of Mahmoud's acceptance of his offers and so important did he consider Mahmoud's proposed action that in his letter of March 30th, 1812, to Berthier, in command of the *Grande Armée*, giving the orders for the campaign against Russia, Napoleon stated that hostilities were being renewed by Turkey against Russia and that the Sultan in person was going to take command of the Turkish army.

At last, after a long series of intrigues, on March 29th, Latour Maubourg succeeded in having an interview with the Foreign Minister. The next morning bright and early, the Foreign Minister informed Canning that he might be perfectly at his

ease respecting the result of the conference and gave him a full account of what had happened. Latour Maubourg had informed the Foreign Minister of the certainty of war with Russia, and had told him in detail of the enormous forces gathered for the destruction of Russia. He had also proposed, acting under full authority of Napoleon, to enter into an agreement to compel Russia to restore to Turkey all the territory wrested by Russia from the Porte, including even the Crimea. The sole condition asked for such an agreement was Mahmoud's engagement not to make peace with Russia without letting Latour Maubourg know of the fact of the peace.

Further, the French Minister stated that without asking even such a simple undertaking on the part of Mahmoud, Napoleon had already entered into a formal agreement with Austria and Prussia, as a preliminary step to their war upon Russia, in order to emphasize their friendly attitude and the interest of Turkey upon their side as against her present foe and despoiler, to the effect that France, Austria and Prussia all three guaranteed the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The French Minister felt that this agreement already made ought to be sufficient to satisfy Mahmoud as to where his interest lay, but coupled with the promise to restore all his

former territory not in exchange for any alliance or agreement to continue the war against Russia but merely upon his simple word that if and when peace were made Latour Maubourg should be promptly informed of it.

In reply the Turkish Foreign Minister had merely agreed to submit the proposal to Mahmoud. This next morning the Foreign Minister besides telling Canning in detail of his interview with Latour Maubourg also told him that nevertheless Mahmoud was still ready to make peace with Russia on reasonable terms and also assured him that the Sultan would not make any agreement with France, and would not even agree to inform the French if he did make peace with Russia.

No answer was to be given to Latour Maubourg but Canning realized fully the weight of Latour Maubourg's proposal. He had no hope that Mahmoud would really not accept the terms offered. No counter terms could be offered to meet this master play by Napoleon. Russia's destruction was inevitable. In their madness, or the duplicity of their ministers, the Russians after Mahmoud's agreement to meet what had been their terms, continued their insistence upon the sacrifice of even more Turkish territory, for still more humiliating terms, among them one that would be likely to cause war between Turkey and Persia, amount-

ing almost to the betrayal of Turkey's old friend and ally. Canning wrote that he could not understand Russia's "unaccountable improvidence."

The Sultan was becoming impatient at Russia's slowness in the negotiations, at her obduracy, at her constantly mounting demands. Every detail of the negotiations was submitted to the Sultan in person, all moves made had his approval.

Latour Maubourg could not believe there would be any hesitancy whatever in accepting the magnificently Napoleonic offer he made.

Nevertheless, three weeks went by without a word in reply. He became anxious and brought up his next heavy gun. The Austrian Ambassador advised the Porte confidentially of the Treaty of Alliance made with France, of the express stipulation in favor of the integrity of the Turkish Empire, of Austria's intended coöperation in the war against Russia, and then, upon the obvious suggestion that the Sultan would refuse the impossible terms offered by Russia, he proposed a combination of military operations for the approaching campaign, which would then extend without interruption from the Baltic to the Black Sea. He expressed Austria's firm friendship, and urged the strictest secrecy. Canning was promptly informed of all the proposals.

The next step was the formal proposal by France

(pursuant to a secret article in the treaty of March 14th, 1812, with Austria) of a Treaty of Alliance with Turkey. Still no answer from the Seraglio. But Canning saw no progress in the negotiations and had the greatest fear of the consequences if peace were not signed before the War in the North actually began. He felt keenly the weakness of his position. He had nothing to offer. Russia would offer nothing.

On April 21st, he had not lost all hope, yet felt the chances were very much against peace with Russia. Napoleon was making every possible exertion. Courier after courier continued to arrive from Paris with still further insistent inducements for Mahmoud.

On April 25th, notwithstanding the Porte's apparent desire to make peace upon moderate concessions from Russia, notwithstanding the evasive answers given Austria, Canning says: "When I look forward to the future I cannot divest myself of every apprehension; and my anxiety respecting the continuance of the war between Russia and the Porte consequently increases." He could not believe that the solid offers of France would be refused. He had nothing with which to oppose them.

Latour Maubourg even went so far as to suggest to Mahmoud through ministers especially friendly

to the French, the threat that the conclusion of a peace with Russia under the existing circumstances would result in war upon Turkey by France and her allies. So far from being intimidated by this threat, Mahmoud notified the Austrians that he would consider an invasion by them of the Turkish provinces then occupied by the Russians for the purpose of attacking the Russians as an act of hostility against Turkey.

When the Turkish Foreign Minister told all this to Stratford Canning, the latter still could not believe it and remained as convinced as ever of the hopelessness of peace between Russia and Turkey.

Napoleon in the meantime had determined to send out General Andréossi to Constantinople in the hope that he might prove a second Sebastiani, "*pour être utile en cas de besoin à l'Empire Ottoman.*" Early enough for the message to reach Constantinople in good season, he also had had his Foreign Minister in Paris advise the Turkish Minister there of the proposal for an alliance with France and Austria, of the promise of restitution of all Turkey's "Lost Provinces," of the certainty of Russian *débâcle*, if Mahmoud would only enter into the coalition and put himself in person at the head of his troops, and that thereby the Ottoman Empire would recover in fact and in the eyes of the world all her ancient grandeur.

Of these latter offers Canning wrote to London on April 26th, lamenting that he had himself no personal influence over any of the Turkish ministers, and begging Wellesley, the English Foreign Minister, to send him instructions and help. But Wellesley's tenure of office had already ceased. On May 1st, Canning received notice of Castlereagh's appointment as Foreign Secretary.

On May 5th, Andréossi was momentarily expected and Canning had involved himself in an unpleasant personal quarrel with the Turkish Foreign Minister. The Turkish Ministers considered England on too friendly terms with Russia for them to regard England still as a friend.

Canning continued in great disfavor with the Foreign Minister until long after the treaty had actually been signed. In his letter of May 17th, the day the preliminary treaty was signed, he refers to this marked disfavor. On May 19th, 1812, Canning wrote to the Head Dragoman of the Porte as follows:

. . . But without reciprocal confidence it is impossible for me to act to any good purpose. If the Reis Efendi continues suspicious of me and of my Government not only is it useless for me to interfere in the affairs of the Porte with Russia, but an interference, so suspected, is inconsistent with the character and the dignity of my Sovereign. The moment decisive of the fate of this

empire is now come, and it is in the choice of the Porte either to secure her own independence and perhaps that of the continent of Europe also, by her present conduct, or to destroy the one and to hasten the fall of the other. I am ready to do all in my power towards the first object and *more perhaps than the Porte is willing to suppose;* but I must be allowed to act in a manner consistent with the character of my Government, or I had better not act at all.

Canning became increasingly irritated and as late as May 22nd sent the following message:

I have nothing to add about the Russian business. The conduct of the Porte has made me indifferent to it. I see plainly that by acting for her service I only expose myself and my Government to every sort of caprice and insult. We have sacrificed too much to our own regard for this Empire. It is time to provide for our own interests elsewhere. There are others who will better appreciate the friendship of England. The Porte will learn her error when it is too late.

The treaty had already been made and in the final form was signed May 28th, 1812.

It was not until June 10th that Canning suddenly and apparently unexpectedly learned of the treaty, through a "confidential channel." The Ottoman ministers continued to deny everything. From these ministers Canning says he continued to meet with nothing but "jealousies, suspicions,

and insults. So disgusting was their behavior, that nothing but my resolution not to allow any secondary considerations to divert me from the great object in view, could have enabled me to endure it for a moment."

On June 18th, Latour Maubourg wrote that he had heard of the signing of a treaty at Bucharest with conditions "*peu honorable pour la Sublime Porte*," but that the Sultan had refused to ratify it. He believed that the treaty was made without Mahmoud's authority and that Mahmoud would not ratify it.

On the 22nd and 23rd, Latour Maubourg reported that the Foreign Minister still denied the making of a treaty, that Mahmoud had rejected it but that rumors continued to fly, that there were murmurings of revolt among the Janissaries, that executions were taking place.

By June 25th, the French Minister had had news that Kutusoff had left for the Russian Headquarters in the North. On June 30th he reported the holding up of his couriers in Bulgaria and Transylvania.

On July 1st, the Foreign Minister was still firm in his denial but the Russian Ambassador had arrived as if in time of peace and Latour Maubourg became increasingly suspicious, but merely suspicious, of the existence of an understanding between

Turkey, Russia and England. He did not know that the Russian admiral, Greig, had already been in Constantinople for some time incognito.

* * *

At Vilna in Lithuania on July 12th, Maret, Napoleon's Foreign Minister wrote at Napoleon's dictation his instructions to Andréossi. In his confidential instructions in cipher he said:

The letter not in cipher which I write you under to-day's date informs you of the favorable situation of affairs and gives you the order to go to Constantinople with the greatest despatch.

If the treaty between the Porte and Russia has not been ratified, your instructions have their natural application. You must make every effort to prevent peace with the Russians and to induce the Grand Signor to engage at last with real activity in the war and to take a great forward step for his Empire.

There are in the destiny of Nations and of Sovereigns times when to a firm will anything is possible and never did such a time present itself in a more pronounced character than now.

Sultan Mahmoud will not find in all the duration of the longest reign an occasion more favorable to strike the imagination of his subjects, to sustain his authority by great results, to overawe the Janissaries, and to destroy forever their tendency to revolution, in short to change the destiny of the Ottoman Empire at home and abroad and restore her ancient glory.

After what we know of the heroic character of His Highness, we cannot believe that he will fail to take advantage of such a wonderful opportunity.

By what considerations might he be dissuaded?

It could certainly not be fear of the Russians, who are now engaged in a struggle where the employment of the whole of their available forces still leaves them in a state of inferiority even in numbers, to say nothing of having by their own admission neither officers nor generals worthy of confidence, and having to fight against the best officers, the best generals and the greatest Captain of the World.

They have spread greatly exaggerated reports concerning the strength of their armies, which we have never believed to be more than 250,000 strong, not including the Army of Turkey, and now since we are face to face with them, the interception of mails and couriers has placed in our hands the official reports of the Generals, Colonels, and Majors to their respective chiefs, by which we are assured that this estimate is still very high. . . .

You ought, M. le Comte, not to neglect any means of protecting the Grand Signor from the timorous counsels which are given him.

There is no real danger for him in a bold resolution. Such a determination offers only undoubted advantages.

These words were really Napoleon's. He was then at Vilna catching up with his diplomatic correspondence before plunging on to Moscow.

Napoleon was right in saying that never by the will of a Sovereign could a more momentous decision be made. When he wrote that sentence you can almost feel a fear that the decision had already been made. In fact it had been made long before. Yet he would not believe that such a vital decision could be kept hidden from him. He did not know Mahmoud.

On July 22nd, Napoleon wrote from Gloubokoie to General Berthier that there were no enemy forces of importance in Volhynia, that the Russian forces alleged to be arriving there "are chimeras, that the Grand Signor has refused to ratify the treaty of peace and that on the contrary the Russians are obliged to send new forces to Moldavia and Wallachia." There is an ironical suggestion of the hand of fate or subconscious prescience in the double meaning of "chimera." Those forces instead of being myths became much more like real fire-breathing monsters to Napoleon.

On this same 22nd of July, Napoleon betrayed his anxiety in his letter to Maret:

I suppose that I have no need to tell you to send couriers once or twice a week to Constantinople to carry the bulletins and all possible news. If I were obliged to enter into details of this kind with you, you would be carrying out my plans very badly. It is necessary

that the Turks enter immediately into Moldavia and Wallachia and menace the Crimea with their fleet.

Independently of the couriers of Vienna, send others by Leopold and Transylvania. This must be much shorter. Mere couriers do not have the same effect as officers. Send, therefore, some Polish officers.

Have the Polish Confederation send an embassy of three members to Turkey. See that they leave without delay to act on behalf of the Confederation and to demand the guarantee of Turkey. You will realize the importance of this step. I have always had it in my mind and I do not know how I should have forgotten until now to give you these orders. Have this deputation leave within a week with a letter from the Confederation for the Grand Signor and proceed with the utmost speed to Constantinople.

In one moment Napoleon was whistling to keep up Berthier's courage, in the next frantically urging Maret to grasp at straws.

A week later from Vitebsk, Napoleon wrote to Maret, "I return to you the enclosed despatches. I still do not understand anything about the Turkish affairs."

Napoleon rarely admitted that he was nonplussed.

* * *

In the meantime but too late for his action to have any effect, Lord Castlereagh, the new

English Foreign Secretary, had become aware of the critical situation at Constantinople, of the importance of Mahmoud's decision. Lord Castlereagh's instructions of March 27th, 1812 to Liston, going out to succeed Canning as ambassador, shows his realization of this importance. Castlereagh instructs Liston to use every means in his power to assist and accelerate peace between the Turks and Russians. He fears (from Continental accounts) that notice of the rupture of the armistice between the Russians and the Turks had been given. He continues:

If the demonstrations of Buonaparte towards the north of Europe should terminate in a war with Russia, it is obvious that the mass of the Russian Forces must be employed on the frontiers of Poland, and that a defensive campaign can alone be carried on upon the Danube.—In this case it is more than probable that the French mission at the Porte, who have probably been the means of hitherto defeating the negotiations for Peace at Bucharest, will encourage the Porte to resist any cession of territory to Russia;—they will also be prepared to guarantee the integrity of the Turkish Empire, and to promise supplies and military aid for effectuating re-conquests from Russia.

It will in this case be your particular duty to guard the Porte against the delusions of France, by referring her to the whole conduct of Buonaparte since his

elevation to Power—from the Invasion of Egypt to the treaty of Tilsit; and to shew that he has been the author of every attack on the Ottoman dominion, either by leading them himself, or by instigating other Powers to that effect. . . .

His (Napoleon's) present appearance of friendship is assured solely with a view the better to complete the subjugation of the North of Europe, in order that, having no longer any formidable enemies in his rear, he may prosecute his long threatened designs against the East and repair the disgrace sustained by the French army at Acre, and in Egypt.

He then speaks of his fears of an alliance between Turkey and France against Russia and continues:

The great object in the present state of Europe is to terminate the war.

Should the obstacles to the conclusion of a Peace be insurmountable, perhaps a Long Truce (an expedient that has on former occasions been had recourse to to save the honour of Both parties) might be brought about.

Should war actually break out between Russia and France, it will be more than ever necessary that you should try to awaken the Turkish Government to the dangers of the Army of France being allowed to make any serious progress in the North. It is probable that the restoration of Amity between Russia and this country would be the immediate consequence of such a war. In this event you must in the strongest manner

urge upon the Ottoman Government how very difficult it will be for us to preserve our ties of friendship with the Porte, if, when our efforts are united with those of Russia to prevent the complete subjugation of Europe, the Porte should in such a struggle, be giving to or receiving assistance from the French. *You cannot push your representations and exertions too far in this direction* [Italics mine]. If, unfortunately, they should become ineffectual, and the Ottoman Government should combine its efforts with France, you will in that case protest in the strongest manner against such measures: but it is not the pleasure of the Prince Regent that you should take any steps towards retiring actually from Constantinople without express orders from home.

He gives Full Power to conclude a formal Treaty of Mediation (whatever that may be) with the Russian and Turkish Powers but particularly cautions against giving "any Guarantee, which under the fluctuating councils of these Powers might involve the British Government in future difficulties."

Precious little to be weighed in the balance against Napoleon's offers. As a fact these instructions were as futile as Napoleon's to Andréossi. Liston reported on July 11th immediately after his arrival at Constantinople, that Canning's efforts had been successful, "if we may judge by the letter from Petersburg."

Russia knew. For Mahmoud's purpose she alone really needed to know then and she alone really knew promptly of the decision. Mahmoud's Ministers still talked with Liston about the "*reasons that had prevented the final conclusion of peace.*" Like Canning, Liston reported to London that the Turkish Foreign Minister was and had been all along an enemy to peace with Russia. The Foreign Minister did not hesitate to express strongly the view that now was Turkey's golden opportunity to recover her "Lost Provinces." "Who now held the whip hand," he asked, "the Emperor of Russia or the Sovereign of Turkey?" He could find no reason whatever for the sacrifices demanded in the proposed treaty—he still considered it unratified—no conceivable reason for Turkey's yielding to those demands.

Two days after this interview, the 13th of July, 1812, the definitive treaty of peace was formally ratified at Bucharest.

The peace, however, served at first only to deflect Romanzoff's attack on Turkey toward the Adriatic. His instructions to Tchitchagoff were to embark upon a wild-goose chase against the idle French troops in Dalmatia, an expedition through the impassable Herzegovinian mountains, then a part of Turkey, without Turkey's consent, a step equivalent to a renewal of war against Turkey.

While Liston was doing what he could to discourage this insane project, and the Turkish ministers were hoping that Tchitchagoff would take the fatal step, the enormous French army was far to the east of the Niemen, marching toward Moscow. Tchitchagoff's army at last marched north.

Andréossi's arrival, his renewal of great offers, his efforts to prevent the treaty,—he still did not know of its existence—are reported by Liston on September 14th. The preposterous ignorance of what was actually going on during nearly the whole year shown by Latour Maubourg, Canning, Liston and Andréossi is understandable when you reflect that without their dragomans they were deaf, dumb and blind and that their dragomans in turn might be made deaf, dumb and blind by influences emanating from Mahmoud. These native dragomans lived in Stamboul.

The strength of the feeling against the treaty, at first merely sullen dissatisfaction, daily grew more threatening in Constantinople as the truth about its terms began to filter out. The enmity towards Russia became more rancorous than ever.

In October, public anger was running still higher, especially over the cession of Bessarabia and of the territory on the left bank of the Danube which carried with it the control of the navigation of the

Danube. To a capital dependent for food upon the supply coming down the Danube from Moldavia, Wallachia and Bulgaria, this was incredible folly in the face of Russia's impending doom. When in addition the refusal to accept Napoleon's offer to restore all the "Lost Provinces" became generally known, a storm of savage anger swept through the capital.

The expected invasion by Persia took place. The Pasha of Bagdad had to buy off the Shah.

As the Turkish Minister had prophesied, the privileges given Servia carried with them the spirit of independence that brought about renewed unrest there and in other provinces.

In Constantinople the wild disorder increased. The Janissaries set the city on fire, prepared for revolution, were ready to overthrow Mahmoud. A letter came from Sir Robert Wilson. Liston wrote to Wilson in reply on Nov. 28th, "Your account of the perilous situation of the French army was wanted (for aught I know) to save this empire."

On December 9th, Liston reported the summary execution of Demetrius Morousi and Panagios Morousi, the two Dragomans of the Porte. The Foreign Minister who had just been expressing to Liston his opposition to the treaty was suddenly struck dumb with terror. The only crime the

younger Morousi was known to have committed had been in acting in everything under this very minister's orders. He knew what the cutting to pieces of Morousi meant. The iron hand of Mahmoud when it struck, struck to kill, not yet could his acts be questioned.

Liston's letter of December 12th, 1812, reporting this situation, contains the following significant passages:

It is remarkable that just at this Moment a general opinion begins to prevail that the Sultan Himself has suddenly changed his plan of Conduct and all at once assumed a new Character.

It was by His particular order that the difficulties which arose in the Congress of Bucharest were successively removed. It was chiefly to His personal Dispositions that The Russians trusted for the fulfillment of the Treaty. . . .

His Ministers now affect to say He takes his Resolutions and gives His Orders without previously consulting with them, and that no Intercession can induce Him to recall a Command once issued. His Sublime Highness had the Reputation of being grave and reserved, strict and steady in his measures of Government and Policy, but just, equitable and moderate in all; whereas He is now accused of having adopted not the sullen, austere Spleen, but the unbridled Despotism, the Capricious and savage cruelties of his more distant Predecessors.

Such is become the opinion of the Publick but especially of the Russian Palace (as the Houses of Foreign Ministers are denominated in this country). . . . Circumstances have within these few days come to my knowledge which convince me that the ultimate intention of this Government is to bring on a Rupture with Russia. . . .

During the course of the Summer and Autumn, the Turks considered Victory as attached to the Arms of France, and still regard the issue of the struggle as likely to be favourable to Bonaparte. A decisive change must take place to prevent great Misfortune, and must take place soon; or it may come too late. . . .

Two Great Powers resolving to humble a Third, the Natural Enemy of the Porte, set out with declaring that if they are successful, they will re-establish the Integrity of the Turkish Dominions. The Art and Address of the Austrian Agent at Constantinople succeeded in persuading the Ottoman Ministers. *I know no motive that could have been urged to persuade the Turks to take up Arms against those two friendly and benevolent Powers, and draw upon themselves the Vengeance of both.* [Italics mine.]

Liston added that a counter-declaration on the part of the Empire of Russia would have great effect, but Russia had taken no step in that direction, had not even used a single civil expression, but on the contrary had maintained an antagonistic attitude.

Within a few days came Wilson's news of the French *débâcle*. The *Grande Armée* had already ceased to exist. Liston in Constantinople was only then learning the truth that it was Mahmoud who, for some reason Liston could not fathom, had struck this vital blow at Napoleon.

* * *

The campaign in Russia considered with a knowledge of the part played by Mahmoud makes a picture very different from that usually presented. The actual facts of the campaign are sufficiently familiar. But the slight emphasis laid on Mahmoud's action, is hard to understand. As far as the resolution of any one man may be said to have brought about such a world-shaking event, it was Mahmoud who made the defeat of Napoleon certain.

Following the Treaty of Bucharest while the main body of the Russian Army of the Danube was going more slowly toward Napoleon's flank, Kutusoff hurried directly to the chief headquarters. Now that the importance of the treaty was plain, Alexander made Kutusoff a Prince. To the great joy of the Russian army, Kutusoff was given supreme command on August 29th, 1812, before the battle of Borodino. The sun of Borodino went down on a field of blood, a drawn battle.

The French could not understand why the Russians after such a slaughter believed the eagles of victory were with their banners.

The sense of the coming of victory stiffening the spines of the Russians was not the result of mere inspiration of confidence in leadership but came from the whisper running through the troops from man to man,—whisper swift as the wings of wildfire that makes or breaks the morale of an army—the whisper that the shrewd old fox, Kutusoff, had come, that peace had been made with Turkey, that the trap was set, ready to be sprung, the army of the Danube about to cut Napoleon's lines of communication, their enemy delivered into their hands for destruction.

Dying in a welter of blood upon the field of Borodino, Russian soldiers in their anguish seemed to hear the thudding hoof-beats of the Army of the Danube, seemed to hear through aching brows clotted to the cold earth the faint throb of distant thunder of the guns of their avengers, sweet music to the tortured dying.

While Moscow was burning, Kutusoff's army, thirty-five miles south,—they could see the conflagration, the gale blew ashes over them—was marching toward the west. And five hundred miles further west, the Army of the Danube marching north, gathering strength as it marched—

soldiers came to it from as far as the Crimea—now with Tormasoff's men a hundred thousand strong, was about to strike Napoleon's defenseless lines of communication.

Not until September 30th, after the burning of Moscow, did Napoleon learn of Mahmoud's treaty with the Russians. On that day he wrote to Maret this laconic message: "I send you the treaty between Russia and the Porte which has been found here in the records at Moscow. It appears that you have not yet received it from Constantinople as you have not sent it to me." At almost the same moment he received definite news of the impending blow from the Army of the Danube at his weakest point. He burst into savage rage and then sank to despair. Not till then could Napoleon believe that to his imperially magnificent offers Mahmoud's ears were deaf. Napoleon saw disaster staring him in the face, saw before him nothing but a hopeless retreat, saw with his swift vision the death trap he was caught in.

And not only did Napoleon know that he was beaten, but his army quickly knew. The shock passed swiftly through the army—thrice woe to the army that knows it is beaten—something vital had gone wrong with the Emperor's plans. He could not meet this attack. And winter in Russia, without shelter, without food.

Many historians seem to take for granted that the cutting of Napoleon's line of retreat by the Army of the Danube was an expected and understandable event. Napoleon and his army had no such feeling.

Again and again Napoleon thought it out. Once he sat for an hour at a council with his generals, his head buried in his hands, his elbows on the table, without a word. He knew that no sovereign of Turkey who wished to remain on his throne could refuse his offers. He knew that he was right in counting on the Russian leadership—diplomats and generals—as no match for him and his staff. Compared to such masters of warfare as Berthier, Murat, Junot, Davout, Oudinot, Ney, Eugene, to say nothing of the Great Captain himself, these Russians were still in the Bronze Age. He had carefully studied the lives of all of them. He knew that they were incapable of the far-seeing stroke of strategy which had checkmated him. What mind had conceived and through all the impossibilities brought this plan to fruition? What mind but his own could have done it? He knew that his own plans were complete and perfect. What he did not know was the mind of Mahmoud. If Mahmoud had been a chatterbox, Napoleon would not have crossed the Niemen.

With Napoleon at Moscow and the Army of the

Danube on his exposed flank, Mahmoud knew that Napoleon was bound to be beaten. But the Russian ministers and generals seemed unable to see it. They bungled every chance. First, they had planned the crazy expedition against Dalmatia for Tchitchagoff. Once, Kutusoff even ordered Tchitchagoff away from his goal, when he was in position to strike the French then retreating, off on another wild-goose chase to Kieff. But this time Tchitchagoff was not stupid enough to obey. On November 16th, he had taken Minsk with its great store of munitions and supplies, Napoleon's last hope for food for his starving men. On the 20th, he had captured the all-important bridge over the Beresina at Borisoff. If he had had the wit and courage to pursue his advantage, he would have had Napoleon in his hands.

The Russians won because they couldn't lose, given the tactical position and the number and bravery of the soldiers they had. It was by Mahmoud's foresight alone, and not by that of any Russian, they were put in that position.

Suffering impossible agony, broken, starving, freezing, the *Grande Armée* staggered to the Beresina, there to meet the final slaughter at the hands of the Army of the Danube. What was then left of the mightiest army the world had ever seen, they started out nearly seven hundred thou-

sand fighting men, was no more than a dispirited rabble of spectral stragglers.

They had lost more than a thousand guns, more than two hundred thousand horses and immense stores of supplies. More than three hundred and fifty thousand of their comrades had died in Russia, to say nothing of tens of thousands of non-combatants. Never have there been greater agonies of human misery.

As fast as horses could be driven, Napoleon fled to Paris, narrowly escaping capture by a company of Cossacks soon after he set out. The Prussians grimly watched his men, more like huddling groups of captives than an army, trying to follow him back to France and knew that the time the Germans could rise against him would come.

Napoleon, arriving at the Tuileries in the dead of night, woke up the household and warming his hands in front of an open fire, said with a shiver, "This is pleasanter than Moscow."

19

The man who might be expected to know a good deal about the fall of Napoleon, the Duke of Wellington, wrote in his memorandum on Napoleon's Russian campaign, the following remarkable passage:

In respect to the Porte, the British Government seized the earliest opportunity of exerting their influence, and succeeding in inducing the Porte to make peace with Russia, thus relieving his Imperial Majesty from the contest with the Porte, and from the necessity of defending himself on his south-east frontier. If the great statesman who at that period conducted the foreign affairs of Great Britain had never rendered to his own country or the world any other service than those above noticed, his name would have gone down to posterity as the man who had foreseen and had afterwards seized the opportunity of rendering to the world *the most important service that ever fell to the lot of any individual to perform.* [Italics mine.]

It was to Castlereagh the Iron Duke gave the credit for this transcendent achievement. Wellington's son, in an editor's note, gave the credit to Wellesley. Neither Castlereagh nor Wellesley had anything to do with the Treaty of Bucharest. True, Wellesley was Foreign Secretary during the period preliminary to the Treaty. But from him Canning had no help, no instructions upon the subject. In fact, during the whole time from Adair's leaving in July, 1810, until Liston's arrival in July, 1812, he had no communication from the Foreign Office on any political subject whatever.

Referring to Wellington's statement, David

Morier, Canning's secretary at Constantinople during this period, said:

> Now this great service was effected by Stratford Canning, then plenipotentiary at Constantinople, without one word of instruction or even of notice, and still less of encouragement, from the Foreign Office, then fast asleep under the Marquis of Wellesley. It was to secure the result so justly appreciated by the Duke that our Elchi, with no assistance and no means but what his own ability and superior sagacity supplied, took upon himself to undertake the task, beset as it was with difficulties and obstacles of every shape and colour, of negociating and effecting the peace between the Porte and the Russian Government just in time to release Chichagov's army—*Quod ego attestor.*

Elchi is the Turkish word for ambassador. Stratford Canning became Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe and is known to history as the Great Elchi.

How little a part Canning had in the making of the Treaty, his own letters show. He was forced to admit time and again to the Turkish ministers that he had no authority from London for the representations he made. I cannot be as positive as Morier and on my part swear that Canning's carefully written memoranda had no weight with Mahmoud but of this I am certain: No man but Mahmoud was responsible for that epoch-making decision.

Just why Mahmoud struck this blow may be open to question, motives are rarely simple enough to be completely separable, but that he did do this, Liston's testimony coupled with the facts of Mahmoud's policy toward England, France and Russia is conclusive. While it is difficult to disentangle motives, if you find a bias of personal feeling, you often find the true reason for an otherwise inexplicable decision. A very little red of personal feeling will color the entire stream of the mind. Strangely enough in no discussion of the causes entering into the making of the treaty has any one brought forward the obvious suggestion that the personal feeling, the individual judgment of Mahmoud was the decisive influence. Yet no force in the world but the activity of the thinking mind of that determined autocratic sovereign could, did bring about the treaty. In Stamboul, Mahmoud alone—he whose relentless hand awaited for eighteen years the moment to throttle the Janissaries—Mahmoud alone had the strength, had the courage, had any motive whatever to strike Napoleon.

As for Stratford Canning's influence, he deserves credit for doing all that he could, but the claim for his success is based upon the exhibition to the Turkish Foreign Minister of an alleged proposed plan between Austria and France for an invasion of

Turkey. This document was a mere unsigned scheme of operations, presumably made by some Austrian staff officer and was two years old. It could have been of no importance at a time when Russia was engaged in a war of aggression against Turkey, and France and Austria were actually fighting Turkey's enemy in this war. Though it is always difficult to measure the relative weight of things that turn the scales of the human mind, Stratford Canning's own letters show how little he had to do with the Treaty of Bucharest. Nor does it take much investigation to find that when Mahmoud was Sultan, he alone made the treaties.

Mahmoud's immediate personal assurance to Russia after the preliminary treaty of Bucharest was signed of his intention to ratify it and carry it out, not only released the veteran armies of Russia under Kutusoff—more than fifty thousand effective men, well-equipped and well-disciplined, far the best of Russia's troops—but also removed the menace of the Turkish foe whose active coöperation with Napoleon at that time would inevitably have led to Russia's defeat. It was not merely that Russia's best army was placed in a tactically perfect position to do the utmost injury to Napoleon but Russia's bitterest enemy, the brave, fanatic Moslem, was taken out of the fight only to watch idly, angrily his prey escape.

In Constantinople, when the treaty was made, there was no voice of authority but that of Mahmoud, powerful, inflexible. The only counsel he relied upon was that of his mother. Sitting beside her son in her quiet garden, she must have smiled a little at the thought of those who attributed this great victory of the enemies of Napoleon to young Stratford Canning, and her smile must have faded at the vision of the humiliation of Josephine, her sweet and gentle cousin. If that vision in his mother's mind did not turn the scales when Mahmoud held the fate of Napoleon in the balance, what then did? Liston could find no motive whatever for Mahmoud's action.

20

Napoleon, to place descendants of his own upon his imperial throne, repudiated Josephine. The turn of the wheel was not complete till Josephine's grandson and not his own became Napoleon III.

21

Mahmoud, like Pierre Dubucq, was a "man of iron, with heart of gold." He needed all his strength for the tasks before him, the hardest of any modern sovereign. Commodore David Porter, the first minister of the United States to Turkey,

said that "in the recesses of the Seraglio Mahmoud caught a light which never penetrated there before." Many another writer has also observed that fact without guessing whence came the light. The secret of Mahmoud was the more easily kept because, to the Turk, the maternity of the Sultan was theoretically a matter of no consequence. The Ottoman cherishes the ancient error that the child inherits his nature from his father alone. The mother of the Sultan has always been a slave.

Mahmoud made a nation, ignorant and contemptuous of all other peoples, recognize the intellectual, political and military superiority of those they disdained. He forced them to adopt the ideas, the customs, and, less wisely, even the costumes of those they regarded as dogs. He used every means in his power, even the establishment of a newspaper for purposes of propaganda, to bring about the reforms he thought necessary for the good of his nation. All historians recognize the fact that he was the only Sultan of the Ottoman Dynasty in modern times, who possessed the qualities of a great ruler; that it was he who prolonged the existence of the Turkish Empire to our day.

Great as was his wisdom, and greater his strength, the tasks before him were greater still. Alone, he fought to keep alight the torch he had

received from his mother, the torch by which he hoped to show to his nation the path to happiness and prosperity. But customs of centuries are slow to change. The gallant spirit of the Dubucs strove in the end in vain against the spites of fortune. This epic contest was all the more tragic because its secret source was hidden within his own heart.

22

Josephine died in 1814. Aimée lived until 1817. When Mahmoud saw that "the black camel of death was about to kneel before the palace door," he sent, in accordance with the promise he had made to his mother, for the head of the French Capucine monastery. In astonishment and fear at the midnight summons to the Seraglio, Father Chrysostome came and administered the last rites of the Church to the dying Valideh Sultan. Mahmoud wept at her bedside. Caliph of the Faithful, by his people he came to be known as the Infidel Sultan.

23

Nor did he forget his mother's long-time enemies, the Janissaries. Not only her enemies, but his enemies and enemies to all his policies. He was

never really at peace with them till he had killed them all. A letter by Sir Robert Wilson to the Duke of Gloucester, dated July 10th, 1812, is illuminating:

> The Grand Signor is by all reported a very able sovereign, indefatigable in application to business, and of undaunted courage. The Janissaries fear his character and his designs, and, I believe, not without reason. In the interim he is wearing a suitable mask, attends to religious observances with a devoted zeal and is less communicative with Franks than any of his predecessors.
>
> Whether he will choose a moment of war or of peace for the execution of his plans will probably depend upon circumstances yet to arise.
>
> But even under Janissary prejudice and despotism, civilization is advancing. A Frank, and particularly an Englishman, may now walk alone in assured security, and intercourse is at his option.

For nearly eighteen years Mahmoud bided his time. During all those years he kept a register of the persons known to have taken the part of the Janissaries. With the greatest of care he laid his plans for meeting the Janissaries in a decisive conflict. His own troops were armed and trained in secret. The Janissaries knew nothing about his purchase of twenty thousand muskets. On the 17th of

June, 1826, he felt that at last he was ready to meet the challenge of the revolt then threatened, ready for the final contest. Again he staked the existence of his Empire upon the success of one blow this time directed at the Janissaries in answer to their insolent demands.

At the vast Mosque of Sultan Achmet I, Mahmoud in person raised the Sandjak Sherif, the sacred green Standard of the Prince of the Prophets, denounced the Janissaries as traitors, and ordered the death of all of them. He called upon the people with the voice of religion and patriotism. Through all the city he sent public criers, summoning the faithful in the name of their religion to repair to the Holy Standard of the Prophet now unfurled before the Mosque at the Hippodrome.

At the Hippodrome, unrivalled stage of history, where once Theodora, orphan daughter of Acacius, bear-keeper for the Green Faction, begged for bread and received from her father's friends only contempt but from his enemies, the Blues, compassionate alms. There, the same Theodora, Empress, wife of the great Justinian, rejoiced in her revenge upon the partizans of Green.

There, the heroic Belisarius with his little troop of soldiers fought the mob and killed thirty thousand. There, was held the pageant of triumph upon his return from victories over the Vandals,

bringing in his train the captured King Gelimer and an incomparable parade of spoils. The proud Gelimer drew his purple robe about him and repeated with scorn: "*Vanitas vanitatum, vanitas vanitatum, et omnia vanitas.*"

There, the Armenian stable-boy, Basil, broke a wild horse and the storming applause of the populace stirred within him the spirit that was to make him Emperor.

By the barbarians of the Fourth Crusade, the great structure was wrecked, the four brazen horses now of Saint Mark survived.

There, amid the ruins the last Byzantine Emperor reviewed his troops the night the Ottoman took the city.

At the Hippodrome, stage for sixteen centuries of matchless pageants of history, there, Mahmoud, holding aloft the Standard of the Prophet, sabre and pistols in his belt, mounted his horse and rode forth at the head of his loyal troops against the stronghold of the Janissaries. Behind him flocked the people. A whiff of grape-shot from his artillery decided the day. No quarter was given. More than ten thousand Janissaries were slain. One by one, those whose names appeared in Mahmoud's list of his enemies were hunted down. Their leaders were hung from the branches of the giant plane tree before the door of the palace where

Aimée had lived. At last the Janissaries, the power of evil she had contended against for so long, were destroyed completely, forever. Their first victory was in 1328, their defeat in 1826.

24

On the summit of the fourth hill of Constantinople, on the site of the Church of the Holy Apostles (the glow of its vanished splendor is reflected in St. Mark's in Venice), the minarets and dome of the mosque of Mohammed II, the Conqueror, tower aloft. Within their shadow, within the sacred enclosure itself, stands one of the most splendid of the imperial Turbehs, the stately rotunda beneath which is buried Aimée Dubuc de Rivery.

Her epitaph, inscribed upon the simple placard before her catafalque, is a poem, a gazel. This Persian form of lyrical verse is used most frequently to express, in exuberant imagery wrought with great delicacy of sentiment, the adoration of a lover for the lady of his heart.

In this poem the name of Aimée is the one by which she was known in the harem, the word *Naksh*, meaning Beautiful. Its connotation is of the beauty of a miniature in an illuminated Persian manuscript. Entering the harem of the Seraglio, a woman lost forever her former name and was

known only by a word describing some outstanding personal characteristic, such as Tall, Neat, Fair-as-the-Moon, Pious, Joyous, Just. These women were all lovely, but among them Aimée was "the Beautiful One,"—*Naksh.*

That she was beautiful is borne out by a singular bit of testimony as to her appearance within the privacy of the inmost veil of the harem. There, with her remarkably fair skin and great mass of pale gold hair, in striking contrast to the dark complexion and black hair of the three charming Georgian ladies who were her intimate associates, she was a picture of resplendent beauty, gowned in robes rich beyond all that can be imagined. A long, bejewelled garment like a pelisse, open in front in Turkish fashion, displaying a dress even more richly embroidered, heavy with a profusion of pearls and precious stones, raiment of superlative beauty befitting the greatest of the Queens of Orient, the Empress of Byzantium.

In loose, thick tresses, her hair hung on each side of her cheeks, covering her shoulders and falling to her waist, in flowing tresses powdered with diamonds. These jewels, seemingly carelessly scattered, not displayed according to any studied arrangement, were held in place by delicate chains and clasps of gold, invisible against the gold of her hair. Slightly tilted to one side, she wore on her

head a small circular cap or headdress that seemed a jewelled diadem.

This sole recorded glimpse of her in the harem shows that she was indeed worthy to be called *Naksh*—"a Picture of Beauty."

Her epitaph, translated without any attempt at the rhyme or meter of the original and with little to indicate the imaginative sense in which common words are used, reads as follows:

The Great King, judicious and wise, the Sun to his Empire,
In whose veins noble foreign blood is mingled with that of the Founder of his Dynasty,
He opened the Gate of the Orient to new light.
With abundance of grain the mills are grinding.
From his bounty both high and low are sustained.
Under his protection the cypress flourishes and the hyacinth unveils the beauty of its blossom.
Through his imperial beneficence the earth is radiant with happiness.
In the rose garden the bud attains its heart's desire.

May his mother's beauty never be forgotten.
May her fame and glory forever be unveiled.
Of her, the majestic Emperor, the Sultan of the World,
Mahmoud, of soul shining as a cloud of heaven, was begotten.

The Beautiful One, her name. The Queen Mother, she was
When this crown of earth was placed upon her head.

O, Sadik, in this chronogram again I live through the agony of sorrow at her death.
In countless tears the blood of my heart flows from my eyes.

Sadik is the real or assumed name of the poet, addressing himself in the apostrophe at the conclusion. Mahmoud was himself a poet and may have had a part in composing this inscription. Beneath this Turbeh sleeps another Valideh Sultan, Adile or 'Adli, the favorite of Mahmoud. It was of her, Mahmoud, skillful archer as well as poet, wrote "she whets her glance's arrow and therewith doth pierce the heart."

The great cypresses of the Seraglio have long been famous but almost no one knew of the secret garden there in which only hyacinths bloomed.

In the final couplet of the epitaph, the poem is referred to as a chronogram. It is not certain that this word is to be taken literally. There may however be concealed within it dates having some significance. If there is any such puzzle, it is a difficult one for the reason that in Turkish twenty-eight out of the thirty-three letters of the alphabet have a numerical significance.

At the end of the inscription is the date 1233 in Arabic numerals. The year 1233 of the Mohammedan era began on November 10th, 1817. From another source the date of Aimée's death is given as 1817.

25

The fixing of the date in the winter time gives a conviction to the account of her death which in some mysterious manner appeared years ago in an obscure provincial French periodical. It is written in the romantic style of the early nineteenth century. Nevertheless you feel that somehow the story came from Father Chrysostome.

This is a literal translation:

It was during a night of winter. Father Chrysostome, Superior of the Convent of Saint Antoine, having retired to his cell, was at the foot of the crucifix. Gusts of wind, shaking the houses, made them creak with lugubrious plaints.

The winds of the Black Sea blowing over the Bosphorus had brought with them storms and tempests. Father Chrysostome heard repeated knocks at the door of the convent. And soon the Brother who answered the knocking at the door, arrives pale and trembling, followed by two palace guards, one of whom approaches the Superior and presents to him an imperial firman. The Reverend Father passes through the church, where

he stops a few moments; then, escorted by the guards, he goes to the port of Galata.

They board, all three, a caïque with twelve pairs of oars which was awaiting them. The bark departs instantly and is lost in the shadows of the night.

In a chamber sumptuously decorated, with rich hangings, with luxurious carpets, was lying on her bed of pain a woman in mortal agony.

A chandelier suspended from the ceiling, candelabras where candles were burning, gave enough light to see what was happening. In this gloomy and silent room, near the bed, a physician dressed in the Greek manner consulted frequently the pulse of the invalid. Behind a balustrade placed beside the door, two black slaves were standing, attentive and ready to execute the orders that might be given them. A few paces farther away, a man whose bearing showed distinction seemed to have given way to a deep and poignant grief.

This man appeared to be forty years old; his height was above the average, a brow high and noble, an expression of one used to command. A beard, black and singularly beautiful, gave to his face a grave and imposing aspect. His costume was simple, but of a rare elegance.

The sighs, the lamentations which he was unable to repress, bore witness to the anguish and the agitation of his soul. . . .

It was already past midnight when a light noise was

heard in the ante-chamber. A slave approached and, bending to the floor, said, "He is here, shall he come in?" The Prince made a sign for him to enter. Then into the chamber was led the monk whom the guards had just brought. The man whom all in this palace obeyed, signaled the attendants to retire and approached the invalid, "My mother," he said to her,"you have wished to die in the religion of your fathers, let your wish be fulfilled. Here is a priest." And he withdrew into a corner of the room.

For an hour, the Prior of Saint Antoine remained alone, listened to the words of regret and repentance, accompanied by abundant tears; then when the prince had returned to the bedside, the priest raised the consecrated wafer, placed it on the lips of the invalid. At this supreme moment, the sole witness of this touching scene flung himself down face to the earth calling upon Allah!

When the sad ceremony was terminated, Father Chrysostome was taken back to his convent in the same caïque and by the same guards who had come to fetch him. The priests and a few Europeans, disturbed at the portentous summons which had come to him in the night brought by the guards of the palace, awaited anxiously his return. Refusing to respond to the questions they addressed to him, he went to prostrate himself on the pavement of the choir of the church, and remained plunged in silent meditation.

Father Chrysostome was praying for the repose of the soul of Aimée Dubuc de Rivery, mother of the Sultan Mahmoud.

In Constantinople, there exists today only the vaguest memory of a French Valideh Sultan. Here and there, in Nantes, in Martinique, in a quiet home in Paris, the memory of her seems to cling like the elusive fragrance of an almost vanished perfume.

26

To account for the fact that such a story could remain so long hidden, remember that Aimée had a most compelling incentive to adhere to the etiquette of the harem, to keep within its veil, to remain secluded behind the inner veil drawn to keep the great ladies even from the eyes of women of lesser dignity. This inner veil was a real one. In the Chamber of Audience of the Valideh Sultan, the throne was invisible behind latticed blinds. The women assembled in the presence of the Valideh Sultan saw only the lofty flight of broad steps, covered with crimson velvet, leading up to the lattice screen. The Crown of the Veiled Heads, however, could see them, and, from a latticed window on one side of the throne-sanctuary, could overlook the quadrangle of the harem and, from a

similar window on the other side, could look toward the sea.

The incentive to the most complete secrecy, always in her mind, was the sense of the danger to her son that lay in knowledge by the people of his empire that his mother was not only an infidel, but an infidel different from the Georgian slaves imbued with Moslem ideas, an intelligent French woman, educated and used to the hated ways of western Europe, a Giaour whose influence was actually changing the ancient customs of the Ottomans. That she could, that she must, that she did keep her secret well guarded is no mystery when you consider how fraught with peril to Mahmoud would be public knowledge of her real personality. In her long vigil she had learned to be ever watchful of that danger.

So well guarded was the secret that till now the story has remained in effect unknown, on the outer border of the consciousness—almost subconsciousness—of history. Finding out about her has been such a difficult task that I am reluctant to confess how much labor it has cost. The game has been fascinating by reason of the very unexpectedness of the places in which I have found concealed some fragment of her story. A large part of these references are in French newspapers and periodicals, hardly accessible except in the *Bibliothèque Natio-*

nale. In fact, the only reference that might be considered generally accessible is a very brief one in Meyer's *Konversations Lexikon* under *Mahmud II.*

That so many people knew something about the story of Aimée Dubuc de Rivery, from such diverse and unrelated sources, became convincing of its truth. A story so improbable would hardly be invented by a writer of fiction. It is impossible that so many persons, far apart in time and place and circumstance, could each invent this one fantastic story, all their accounts having some verifiable facts tending to corroborate one another, all using the name of a real but relatively unknown person, and all fitting in with a larger scheme of facts of which the writers were ignorant. Not only were these writers ignorant of this larger scheme of facts, but nowhere have I been able to find these facts set forth except in the unpublished diplomatic correspondence in the archives of the Foreign Office in London and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris.

There is no shred of information anywhere so far as I can find even remotely tending to suggest that the mother of Mahmoud was any other person than Aimée Dubuc de Rivery.

While I consider this volume, at best, only a partial revealing of the truth hidden behind a most baffling, century-old veil of mystery, nevertheless,

after every test I have tried, to my mind the story rings true.

One reason I venture upon the publication of the book in this somewhat challenging form is the hope that it may result in bringing to light additional facts bearing upon this secret of history.

27

Perhaps only a person who has no reputation as an historian to lose would have the temerity to reconstruct the best known drama of history, 1812, to introduce into it new characters, and, instead of a pageant of more or less unthinking armies, to make of it a version of the ancient theme of Nemesis, divine retribution moved by very human resentment.

In the writing of history a good deal of risk attaches to a varying of the conventional form of the play. It is, however, as plain as a pikestaff that an important part of the business of history is to select, out of the endless individuality of life, a few of the more colorful dramatic personalities, envisage them from the point of view of every-day human nature, and set them to playing again the drama of the past—as if the future were scrutinizing the present. With such a task of Olympian clairvoyance the result must be imperfect.

Whether or not my inference as to the part played by human emotion in this particular episode of history is correct, there can be no doubt as to the importance of such forces in life. The open sesame that commands the door entering into the life of the past is not any formula of non-personal abstraction. The key to that door is not to be found among the theorems of geology, or climate, or biology, or machines, or economics.

The laws of the history of mankind are the laws of the human mind and heart. The forces that mold history range from instinctive habits to the lightning flashes of human nature,—emotion, imagination. "Imagination," Napoleon said, "governs the universe." Out of the imagination of the French, he built his empire. From the Roman matron his Italian mother came the force of domination that made Napoleone da Buonaparte the latest of Roman Emperors. Mahmoud's sense of human capacity for progress as a significant manifestation of the vital flame of the imagination came from his mother's *esprit*. Napoleon said, "*le sabre est toujours battu par l'esprit.*"

The touchstone of history is human nature. In all the infinite individuality of human minds,—no two are alike, no two ever were alike, no two ever will be alike,—their nature, their ways remain similar. An understanding of the springs and

levers that move the minds of men is just as essential to a knowledge of business, politics, society—history in the making—as it is to the study of history.

Our real interest is not in the structure of the mind from a mechanistic point of view but is in the living, thinking, acting, creating spirit of individual human beings, in the expression of their personality. Such things as good breeding and good manners, good taste and good humor, common-sense and sound judgment, the sense of right and an abiding faith have a universal basis in the harmonies of life. In the study of human character we instinctively prefer the point of view of the artist. In that science Shakespeare still is first.

Shakespeare—and the Martinique negro with his *foumi fou* . . .—each earned his salt of wisdom by the sweat of the brow of experience. An understanding of the workings of human nature is not only a touchstone of literature and history but is also a true abecedary of the art of living.

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